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PREFACE.

THE book we *wish* for, is not always the book we *want*; because our minds are not always sufficiently enlightened to know exactly what we want, and sometimes they are under an improper bias, so that we do not wish for what we really want. If we wish for what we really want, it is probable that we shall be satisfied; for it is much easier to satisfy our wants than our wishes. Different persons want different books, because some need instruction, some consolation, some reproof, and some impression. No one book, if it is a consecutive treatise upon any one subject, can meet the wants of all, or all the wants of any one. But a book made up of short pieces on many subjects, may contain something that all want, though not all that each one wants. The object of this little book is, to present so

many portions of divine truth, that it may contain something that every reader wants; so that each one may say, "It contains, at least *something*, that I want." But we often want a book to present to another, in which there is something that we think will meet the case, without the title, or the running subject, appearing to be personal. The parties we wish to benefit, may be saints, or sinners; professors, or making no profession. The subject we wish to set before them may refer to their state, or their duty. We may wish to encourage, or correct; to convince, or to comfort; to lead to Christ, or bring back to the profession of Christ. Now we cannot expect to have separate books, on every distinct subject; nor does it appear desirable; for besides the expense incurred, they would not be read. A few books touching on many points, are more likely to be useful.

Here then is our object, and in this book, we hope the reader will find, light for the head, food for the heart, and a rule for the feet. Some things adapted to convince of sin,—reveal the

Saviour,—reprove the sinner,—encourage the believer,—reclaim the backslider,—prepare for usefulness on earth, and God's glorious presence in heaven. May the Most High give it his sanction, and commission it to accomplish such desirable results. One thing is certain, if it leads souls to Christ, if it reclaims sinners from the error of their ways, if it deepens the sanctification of the heart, and if it issues in an increase of usefulness, the parties thus benefited will say, "IT WAS THE BOOK THAT I WANTED:" and will be prepared to present it to their friends and relatives saying, "This is THE BOOK THAT YOU WANT."

But in order that it may prove beneficial, it must be read with prayer, for no book can do us real good, except its contents are accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. He must quicken the soul to feel, enlighten the mind to perceive, and open the heart to receive, or we shall write and read in vain. His gracious teachings and operations are absolutely necessary, to render even the truth itself profitable

unto us. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." On him therefore our dependance must be placed, his blessed influence we must seek, while we make use of the means which a gracious providence has put into our hands. We must beware, lest we put the means in the place of the Divine agent; and be equally careful lest under the idea of trusting in Divine agency we slight or neglect to use the means. Let us read the book ourselves, or present it to others, looking up to the Lord for his blessing, and ascribing all the good that is effected by it, to the blessing of our gracious God upon it. Holy Spirit, breathe upon every soul that shall read these pages, and make this little work a real blessing to thousands, and thou shalt have all the praise.

JAMES SMITH.

Cheltenham.

THE

BOOK THAT YOU WANT.

&c.

A SAVIOUR.

All have sinned and come short of God's glory. We have none of us, made it the one grand end of life, to glorify God. And yet this was God's design in our creation. As we have wilfully neglected our duty, as we have openly opposed God's design, we deserve to be punished. God is righteous, and therefore we may expect to suffer. But if God punish us as our iniquities deserve, if he deal with us according to the demerit of our sin, we are lost for ever: for our punishment will be eternal. Sin is an insult offered to infinite majesty, it is the creature setting himself in opposition to God. It is such an opposition as will never be satisfied, but with the conquest of the Most High, the annihilation of the Eternal. The cry of the sinner's conduct is "No God." By nature, we are haters of God · by practice, enemies to God;

and we dread the idea of appearing before God. To punish us therefore would be only just; to punish us until we repent, reform, and expiate our guilt, would be only just. But if God so punish us, our punishment must last for ever; for man never will really repent, until God changes his heart; and man never can expiate his guilt, for he has no sacrifice that can atone for it. If we have our deserts then, we must be sent to hell. If we are left to ourselves, we shall certainly travel to that place of torment. We are not heartily sorry that we have offended God, violated his law, and merited his wrath; nor shall we ever be, until God renovates our souls. And if we were, our sorrow would be no atonement; our sufferings could never meet the demands of divine justice; nor our efforts restore God's rights. Under these circumstances, what can we do? How can we escape? What will God do? Will he punish us? Will he consign us to hopeless despair? Will he leave us to reap the due desert of our deeds? He may justly do so—and if he did, he would be as holy as happy, and as just, as he can be. No one could charge him with doing wrong. No lost sinner could say, he had not got his rights. Such is our condition. We lie absolutely at God's mercy. If he interpose for us, it must be an act of his sovereignty. It must be in the exercise of his own prerogative. If all are lost, he is perfectly just. If any are saved, he is infinitely merciful.

But God is represented in his word, as looking down upon us in our lost condition. As pitying our wretched case. As loving us, while enemies to him. As saying "I will send them a Saviour, and a great one; and he shall deliver them." This thought, of saving us, arose spontaneously in his own breast. This promise, to provide a Saviour, flowed freely from his own grace. And this Saviour, was no less a person, than his only begotten, and co-equal Son. One less glorious, could not save. One more glorious did not exist. He was in every sense "equal with God." He was "God over all, and blessed for evermore." He possessed divinity; and that he might save, he assumed humanity. He was "in the form of God," and "he took upon him the form of a servant." He was "the image of the invisible God," and he "was made in the likeness of man." He was truly God, and he became really man; so that he was God and man in one person. Thus he could merit, for he was independant; he could obey, for "he was made under the law;" he could atone, for "he gave himself for our sins." Having assumed our nature, he took our place, he became a substitute to obey and suffer in our stead. The righteousness required by us, was wrought by him. The threatening pronounced against us, was executed upon him. Our sins were laid to his charge. Our guilt was transferred to his person. The atonement necessary for us, was made by his death. He came into the world to save sinners.

He died, that sinners might not die. He suffered the due desert of our sins, that it might not be exacted of us. He did all, he suffered all, and he procured all, that is necessary for our salvation. So that now, "he is able to save to the uttermost," to "save for evermore, all that come unto God by him." There is no impediment in the way, to hinder the salvation of any sinner, who is willing and desires to be saved by him. All things are delivered unto him by the Father, and as possessing all things he calls to the weary, labouring, restless, burdened, and depressed sinner to come to him, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." We all deserve to perish, and yet no one need perish, where the gospel is preached. Yea, no one shall perish, who is willing to be saved by Jesus, for thus it is written in God's own book, and the truth of it has been proved by hundreds of thousands now in glory, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him *should not perish*, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; *but that the world through him might be saved*."

Now, supposing you are convinced of sin, you see that you deserve to perish, you feel alarmed at your condition, you are concerned to flee from the wrath to come, you are willing to be saved in God's way, but still you feel perplexed and afraid, and ask, "What must I do to enjoy sal-

vation?" The scriptural answer is, "Only believe." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved.*" That is, believe that Jesus Christ came into the world on purpose to save sinners—that he is able and willing to save every sinner that is willing to be saved by him,—and in the exercise of this faith, commit your soul to him, venture your eternal all on him, place your entire confidence in him, and expect that God will pardon your sins, accept your person, and justify your soul, solely on account of what he has done and suffered. This will bring peace to your conscience, cause joy to spring up in your heart, and fill your mouth with praises to his great and glorious name. You will love God, because he gave his Son. You will love Jesus, because he laid down his life for you. You will love the Holy Spirit, because he has revealed these things unto you. You will find that his "ways are ways of pleasantness," and that all his "paths are peace." Look at the typical representation of this transaction. A Jew is convinced of sin—he consults the law of Moses—he takes the sacrifice appointed—he comes to the priest and placing his hands on its head, confesses his sin over it—he delivers it to the priest—it is slain as his substitute—its blood is taken into the sanctuary and presented to God—the priest comes out of the holy place from before God, and pronounces the benediction—the man returns to his own home peaceful and happy. Why? The atonement required

has been made—the blood of the victim has been accepted—the blessing of God has been pronounced—the requirements of the law have been met,—the man has now nothing to fear, he is entitled to all the privileges of the dispensation under which he is placed—he may "eat his bread with joy, and drink his wine with a merry heart." Now it is just so with us, we are convinced of sin,—we desire salvation,—Jesus is our sacrifice,—we confess our sin over him,—we plead with God to pardon us for his sake—we exercise confidence in his word, where he has said, "If we confess our sins, *he is* FAITHFUL *and* JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The result is, we have peace, we joy in God, we are saved "with an everlasting salvation."

If we have not peace, it is either because we do not believe God's testimony concerning his Son, or we have not confidence in the merit and mercy of Jesus, or we do not understand the gospel. For if we believe that Jesus is both able and willing to save all who believe in him, as he has said—if we place our confidence in him alone—if we give credit to the inspired statement, that "whosoever believeth on him hath everlasting life,"—how can we be otherwise than peaceful, being thus assured that God is at peace with us—that he has forgiven all our sins for his dear Son's sake—and has received us with joy as his returning prodigals? But perhaps you will say, "I want to feel that I am pardoned, and

that God is at peace." But you never can feel it, until you believe it; for feeling flows from believing, not believing from feeling. Your faith must rest on God's veracity, not on your feelings. You are required to believe that your sins are pardoned, because God has promised to pardon *every one* that looks to, trusts in, and relies for salvation solely on Jesus. Now if you look to Jesus for righteousness, if you trust to his atonement alone for the pardon of your sins, if you commit yourself to him to be saved by his merit and ruled by his word, ***your sins are pardoned.*** "God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven you all trespasses." He hath "blotted out your sins as a cloud, and your iniquities as a thick cloud." He has placed the perfect work of Christ to your account, and you are "accepted in the Beloved." There are no charges against you in God's book. There is no wrath against you in God's nature. Every promise in the Bible is yours, and there is nothing in God's heart towards you but love. You ought to be at peace. You will be at peace, if you believe God, in preference to Satan; look to Jesus, instead of looking unto self; and encourage confidence in God, instead of doubting his loving heart and gracious word.

"But does not the Holy Spirit produce assurance in the believer's mind?" Yes he does, but he works by the word: and if you are waiting, looking, and expecting the Holy Spirit to work without the word, you will wait a long time Beware of putting the work of the Holy

Spirit in the place of the work of Christ, some do this. We are justified by believing in Jesus, and "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." You should pray that the Holy Spirit would give you faith, strengthen your faith, and fix your faith steadily on Jesus; but you should not expect the Holy Spirit to give you peace or assurance, but through your looking simply to Jesus, as directed in his holy gospel. If you are sitting down, waiting, and thinking that at some time, in some sudden, inexplicable way, the Holy Spirit will assure you of pardon, and seal you unto the day of redemption, you are on dangerous ground. You may have to wait very long and your life will be full of fears, doubts, misgivings, forebodings, and all manner of gloomy things; but if on the other hand, you receive into your mind the plain, simple statements of the gospel; give credit to what God has said; exercise confidence in his truth and faithfulness; renounce every thing but the finished work of Jesus as the ground of your acceptance with God; and trust simply, heartily, and wholly in his blood and obedience; you will find peace, enjoy repose, and walk with God in comfort and fellowship. "This is the way, walk ye in it." Pray *for* the Holy Spirit. Pray *to* the Holy Spirit. Expect the help and assistance of the Holy Spirit. Honour the Holy Spirit in your creed, and with your confidence; but do not place the Holy Spirit or his work where the gospel places Jesus and his precious blood.—

Depend on God's firm and unchangeable word, not on your uncertain and changeable feelings. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Rest assured of the truth of this sweet, simple, and blessed passage of Scripture, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.* For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

But there is no salvation without faith. If therefore you are not believing God's testimony, if you are not exercising confidence in Jesus, if you are not renouncing every thing for him; and giving up yourself entirely to him, if you do not rely on his atonement and regulate your life by his word, "Christ is become of none effect unto you." As far as you are concerned at present, he may as well not have died. He bids you come unto him, but you will not. He offers you living water, but you will not receive it. He promises you life, everlasting life upon believing, but you do not care for it; he threatens you with everlasting destruction from his presence if you reject it, but you treat it with contempt. You are resting upon some supposed righteousness of your own, or Gallio like, you care for none of these things. In either case you are in a perilous condition. Your danger is imminent. Your breath is in your nostrils, at any moment you may be cut down, and if you die in your

sins, for sin you must for ever suffer. There is now a Saviour, and a great one, and he is both able and willing to save you. He sends you a message to this effect, but if you put it from you, and by so doing, pronounce yourself unworthy of everlasting life, the consequences will be fearful. Let me therefore beseech you, as Paul did sinners in his day, "*Be reconciled to God.*" You have grieved his loving heart. You have violated his holy law. You have provoked the eyes of his holiness. You have exposed yourself to his everlasting wrath. But he is loath to punish. He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, no not the vilest. He would rather you should turn to him and live, hear his own words. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." What can be plainer? What more encouraging? And what guilt must be contracted by the soul that refuses to listen to so gracious an invitation, or rejects so precious a promise? Beloved reader, let me intreat you to receive Christ at once, cast yourself into the arms of his mercy, rely on his faithful word, and

you will rejoice in his free, full, and everlasting salvation. You have his word, "I will in no wise cast out." You have his oath, "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Shall he have your refusal? Shall he be compelled to execute the fearful sentence, and banish you from his presence, with "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?"

From the cross uplifted high,
Where the Saviour deigns to die,
What melodious sounds I hear,
Bursting on my ravished ear!
Love's redeeming work is done!
Come and welcome, sinner, come!

Sprinkle now with blood the throne,
Why beneath thy burden groan!
On my pierced body laid,
Justice owns the ransom paid:
Bow the knee and kiss the Son,
Come and welcome, sinner, come!

Spread for thee, the festal board,
See with richest dainties stor'd;
To thy Father's bosom press'd,
Yet again a child confess'd;
Never from his house to roam;
Come and welcome, sinners, come!

Soon the days of life shall end;
Lo! I come! your Saviour, Friend—
Safe your spirits to convey
To the realms of endless day,
Up to my eternal home!
Come and welcome, sinner, come!

THE TRIED SAINT.

I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. PSALM XXXVIII. 5.

To be troubled, is to be agitated, distressed, and burdened in mind; and such is often the case with the believer. His faith is weak; his trials are numerous; therefore he is often agitated and cast down. Sometimes the cause of trouble is in the domestic circle. When minds are not well matched, when natural dispositions do not agree, except there be much grace, there will be great trouble. Many Christians do not like the place assigned to them by Providence; they do not relish the self-denying precepts given to them in the gospel; and, therefore, they do not endeavour to reduce them to practice, and this always causes trouble. If the husband does not endeavour to love his wife, even as Christ loves his church; and if the wife refuses to submit to the authority of the husband, making his will her law, there must be frequent jars, conflicts, and disagreements, and these trouble the spirit. If children are not trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, or if they are headstrong, unruly, and unlovely in their tempers, there will be trouble. Many godly parents have often to retire to the closet and sigh out before the Lord, "I am troubled; I am bowed down

greatly." Family trials are often kept in the family; no one knows them but the parties who endure them, nor, as a rule, should they; but in consequence of this, many suffer deeply who are not supposed to suffer at all. Oh, the bitter nights and sorrowful days which many believers pass through in secret, arising from domestic troubles! What a mercy that there is a throne of grace, a loving Father who listens to our secret sighs, and hears our painful confessions, which we dare make to no one but himself, for if this were not the case, many a Christian's heart would break.

Very frequently the source of trouble is within. It is soul-trouble, which is trouble with an emphasis. Guilt is contracted, confession is neglected, and the eye is taken off the great atoning sacrifice, and then comes trouble. The evidences are beclouded, the prospects are darkened, the heart is contracted, fears are awakened, and unbelief becomes strong. The spirit of prayer departs, the heart is drained of its comfort, and the soul, which was like a well-watered garden, becomes like a barren desert. Every duty is a task, and what was a sweet privilege becomes a burden. The Bible is a sealed book, the ordinances of God's house are like dry breasts, and Christian conversation is wearisome. Conscience accuses, memory furnishes the indictment, and Satan tempts us to despair. Past experience appears to have been a delusion, and a spirit of restlessness seizes us;

so that, like the unclean spirit which went out of the man, we wander through dry places, seeking rest, but finding none. If we look up, God appears to be an angry Judge; if we look back, our iniquities are set in array against us; if we look around, we cannot see any of the Lord's people exercised as we are; and if we look forward, the idea of eternity without hope is dreadful. Now the soul sighs out, "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly." No one knows what sin is, who has not seen it in the light of God's countenance; nor can any one tell the trouble occasioned by a guilty conscience, but he who has smarted beneath its lashes. Precious, infinitely precious, is the blood of Jesus which heals it; and gracious, unspeakably gracious, is the Holy Spirit who applies that blood unto us. Without that blood, and without this blessed Spirit, the poor troubled sinner would sink into despair, or rush into desperation.

The law of sin in the members is a constant source of trouble. It is always present. It is ever active. It is sometimes exceedingly powerful. It is upon this that Satan works, and by this he often brings us into bondage. When this law is realized in its full force, every grace appears to be buried under a heap of corruption, and the dreadful evils of the heart are set in motion. What images are painted on the imagination! What horrible thoughts pass through the soul! What indescribable evils are working in the hidden chambers of the heart!

Oh, it is fearful sometimes, when the flesh is lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would! What fearful thoughts of God,—what dread conceptions of eternity,—what alarming ideas respecting the Bible, the Saviour, and the blessed Spirit! The soul is indeed agitated, depressed, and wearied. The conflict is severe. It is only as we wield the sword of the Spirit, oppose the shield of faith, and cry unto the Strong for strength, that we can prevail. Many of the Lord's people suffer a secret martyrdom; for they are so harassed, perplexed, and confounded by the working of the law of sin in their members, that their life hangs in doubt, their fears are like the rack, and unbelief, like a fire, scorches up their spirits. This makes them exclaim, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The temptations, insinuations, and suggestions of Satan are another cause of trouble to the believer. He worries those whom he cannot devour. He distresses those whom he cannot destroy. Now he tries to draw into sin, and then to drive into despair. Now he employs external agents, and then he secretly works upon the mind. Sometimes he comes in his own true colours, and sometimes he is transformed into an angel of light. Oh, the devices he uses, the stratagems he employs, to distress and trouble us! Now he fills the heart with foul, debasing, devilish thoughts, such as no Christian dare utter, such

as no author dare write. Then he misrepresents God's character, and insinuates the vilest thoughts against his goodness and his grace. Now the object of his attack is God's word, and he assaults us in reference to its authenticity, inspiration, and purity. Then he calls attention to the church of God, and shows up all that is inconsistent among the saints, and tries to alienate our hearts from them. Now he tries to undermine our faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus, and then he levels all his artillery against the glorious person, and gracious work of the Holy Spirit. His one object is to generate doubt, foster unbelief, and lead us into sin, desperation, and despair. Well may the apostle compare it to wrestling, when he says, "We wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." They are wicked spirits, full of spite and malice against God, against his Son, and against every one that desires to honour his dear name. It is a fearful struggle often, so that we are "troubled and bowed down greatly."

What with trouble in the world, trials in the church, disorders in the family, occasionally guilt upon the conscience, the law of sin in the members warring against the law of the mind, and the buffetings, suggestions, and temptations of Satan, the true believer proves his life to be a conflict, his course a trial, and all the consolations of the gospel necessary. He is often

troubled, and deep sighs, heavy groans, and heart-felt cries ascend from him to the throne of his gracious God. He is bowed down, straitened in spirit, and so pressed in soul, that he knows not what to do. His burden appears too heavy for him to bear, and would be, only that his Saviour's strength is made perfect in his weakness. He desires to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul; but often that heart appears full of rebellion, and is as hard as a stone. He would be constantly ascending to God in the exercise of prayer and praise; but instead of this, he is often prayerless, indifferent, and ungrateful. He would exercise faith in his word, and trust in his wise and holy providence; but, alas he discredits the promise, doubts God's goodness, is discontented, and murmurs at his lot! He wishes to walk in the light, as God is in the light, that he may enjoy high and holy fellowship with him; but he is dark, distant, and knows little of the holy intercourse he longs for.

Thus he goes mourning, at times, all the day long. He mourns over the hardness, depravity, and coldness of his heart. He mourns because sin dwells in him, works in him, and he fears will some day overcome him. He mourns lest he should offend the Lord, grieve the Holy Spirit, or wound his beloved Saviour anew. He mourns because his love is so feeble, fitful, and imperfect. He mourns because he cannot serve God as he requires, or be holy as he commands him. He mourns because his repentance is not deep

enough: he does not, he cannot, sorrow for sin as he wishes, because he is so little affected when he sees others sin, and grieves so slightly over his own. He mourns because, notwithstanding all, pride still works in his nature, though he wishes to lie low in the dust, and be clothed with humility before God and man. He mourns, at times, lest his spot should not be the spot of God's children, or his experience be different from theirs: this frequently wounds his feelings, burdens his soul, sinks his spirits, shakes his hopes, fills him with fears, and makes him groan. Then he cries, "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long."

Reader, are you troubled *for* sin? Are you ever troubled *by* Satan? Are you ever bowed down *in* sorrow, burdened *with* guilt, and *laid low* before the Lord? Do you ever mourn over your imperfections, repent of your sins, and sigh and strive for holiness? Real religion is experimental, and though all do not experience the whole of what I have written, yet every true Christian does, or will, know something about it. It is necessary to strip him of self, divorce him from the law, teach him his own weakness, lead him to rely entirely on the Lord Jesus, and gladly accept salvation as the gift of free grace. Those who are thus tried, have low thoughts of themselves, and high thoughts of Christ; they walk softly before God, without boasting, or self-conceit; and they renounce all confidence in the flesh, placing confidence in God's covenant-mercy

alone. To them Christ is precious. To them free grace is sweet. To them the cross is glorious. To them the absolute promises are necessary. To them heaven will be a place of rest, satisfaction, and rojoicing; and throughout eternity they will admire, adore, and enjoy the wonders of redeeming love.

Great God, if thou should'st bring me near,
To answer at thy awful bar,
And my own self defend;
If Jesus did himself withdraw,
I know thy holy fiery law
My soul to hell would send!

A sinner self condemned I come,
Worthy that thou should'st me consume;
But oh! one thing I plead!
E'en every mite to thee I owed,
Christ Jesus with his own heart's blood,
In pity for me paid!

Now should'st thou me to judgment call,
Though Satan faced me there, and all
My dreadful sins appeared,
I need not fear, but boldly stand;—
Through Jesu's pierced heart and hands
I know I should be spared!

My full receipt should there be showed,
Written with iron pens in blood
On Jesu's hands and side!
I 'm safe, I 'll shout, Oh! law and sin,
Ye cannot bring me guilty in,
For Christ was crucified!

A WORD FOR MINISTERS.

"I DO try,"—exclaimed a discouraged minister of Jesus Christ, as he was walking abroad one Monday morning to cool his burning brow and calm his throbbing temples, after an anxious and earnest Sabbath,—"I do try to bring sinners to Jesus, and to make the Lord's people a zealous, active, and holy people. God knows, who reads my heart, that the strongest and warmest desire of my soul, is to be made useful in the conversion of immortal souls. I try to warn them most solemnly, to exhort them most earnestly, and to invite them most affectionately; but, alas, I seem to labour almost in vain. Who hath believed my report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Others have large congregations, but mine is small. Others reap much fruit; I have only now and then a convert. How is it? What can be the cause? Lord, search me, try me, and show me what it is that makes me unfruitful. Is it in the tongue, the temper, the conduct, or the state of the heart? Whatever it is, Lord, correct it, and make me a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." What does this painful and gloomy experience of God's minister teach us?

The true condition of human nature. Man is alienated from the life of God, through the

ignorance that is in him. He is without God in the world. He is dead in trespasses and sins. He is altogether indifferent to his eternal concerns, and blind to his best interests. He goes on in darkness. He is like the deaf adder who stoppeth his ears, refusing to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. He has eyes, but he sees not; ears, but he hears not; an immortal soul exposed to never ending woe, but he heeds not. He silences the voice of conscience, hardens his heart against fear, and casts God's word behind him. He is all life to the things of time, but is as dead as a corpse to the things that are eternal. Ministers may teach, warn, threaten, exhort, and invite; but he is still careless and indifferent, and goes on choosing death rather than life; so that every sinner that is saved is a miracle of mercy. It teaches us also,

The weakness and inefficiency of human agency. We may choose the fittest instruments, qualify them to the best of our power, use them in the wisest and most prudent manner, and yet sinners remain as they were. We may convince the judgment, but the heart needs to be changed. We may alarm the conscience, but the will must be renewed. We may impart light, but the dead need divine life. We try, and try, and try again; but the dry bones still lie in the open valley; the sinner still hugs his darling lusts; Satan still leads captive the multitude at his will. We may please them, but we cannot convert them. We may

be unto them as the voice of a very lovely song, as one that can play well upon an instrument; but they still love the world, and their hearts go after their covetousness. We are like the prophet's servant who ran with his master's staff, laid it on the child's face, and expected it to revive; but had to return and say, "Master, the child is not awaked." We learn, too,

The absolute necessity of divine power. Except God work, all is vain. They will hear no voice but his. They will acknowledge no authority but his. It is not the gospel. It is not the minister. It is not the manner. We may preach the truth; we may be solemn, earnest, and affectionate; but without the direct putting forth the power of God, all will be in vain. It is not by the power of argument, or eloquence, or earnestness, but only by the power of God, that sinners are turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Except the Holy Spirit be present, and, being present, work through the truth no soul will be converted, no sinner will believe on Christ. We are absolutely and always dependant on the Holy Spirit for success, and without his influence and operations we shall labour in vain. But it is to be feared that we do not sufficiently realize this. Indeed, if our prayers, and the prayers of our people, are to judge us, it is as clear as daylight that we do not. It says to us, also,

Aim to please the Lord, and seek his glory, as the first and last end of the ministry. This

is, in reality, our one business. If the Lord is pleased with our persons as united to his beloved Son, and if he accepts of our poor services for the dear Redeemer's sake, this ought to satisfy us. God can glorify himself in us when few souls are brought to Christ by us; therefore while we ought earnestly to seek, and constantly to strive for, the conversion of souls, we ought not to be too much discouraged because we see not the results we desire. If we keep God's glory in view, and aim to please him in our ministry, we shall no doubt be in a good degree successful; and he will commend our diligence, and reward our faithfulness, when we are not. The greatest thing we can do is to please God; and this we may easily do if our eye is single, our heart honest, and our life consecrated to his service and praise. He is pleased with us whenever we try to please him. Let us therefore fix the eye on his glory, be willing to do just that work which he has cut out for us, and leave all the results with him. He is not unfaithful to forget our work of faith and labour of love. Loving labours he always approves of, and loving labourers are his especial favourites. Oh, for more love! Love to God as our just and holy Sovereign, to Jesus as our divine Lord and Master, to all the saints as the sons of God and friends of Jesus, and to all poor sinners that we may try by all means to win them back to God and glory.

Still ministers are often discouraged, and they will be so long as they look so much at their

people, at the result of their labours, and at their immediate success; instead of looking simply to the Lord, and seeking his approbation. We must endeavour to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, and in every thing strive to please Him who hath chosen us to be his soldiers. There will always be enough to try us, to exercise our graces, and to keep us humble; but there is always enough to stimulate us, to cheer us, and embolden us in the good cause. No man knows the extent of his own usefulness now; God is often working by us when we conclude that nothing is doing, and very likely we shall see by and bye, that what we thought were among the most barren periods of our ministry, have been in reality among the most productive. Of old it was said, for the incouragement of depressed and diligent labourers, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, *shall doubtless* come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." And long since then it was added, for the benefit of similar characters, "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Success is not put in our own power, the Lord keeps that in his own hands; we may be faithful, we ought to be hopeful, we must be industrious; and the rest we may very well leave with the Lord. Only let us so act that it may be said of us, as of the good woman of old, "*She hath done what she could;*" and then all will be well,

and well for ever. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord, *forasmuch as ye know* that your labour is *not* in vain in the Lord." Then shall it be said unto you by the Master when he cometh, to your everlasting joy, and the everlasting confusion of all your foes, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Shepherd of souls, if thou indeed
Hast raised me up thy flock to feed,
(Thy meanest servant, me)
O may I all their burthens share,
And gently in my bosom bear
The lambs redeemed by thee.

Thy Spirit send me from above,
Spirit of meek, longsuffering love,
Of all-sufficient grace;
Indue me with thy constant mind,
So good, so obstinately kind
To our rebellious race.

A faithful steward of my Lord,
Give me to minister thy word,
And in thy steps to tread;
By every sore temptation tried,
By sufferings fully qualified
Thy ailing flock to lead.

THE CARELESS ADMONISHED.

Be troubled, ye careless ones. ISAIAH xxxii. 11.

THOSE who are at peace with God, who walk in fellowship with God, and habitually strive to honour God, have no reason to be troubled. Nothing should disturb their peace, perplex their mind, or cause them anxiety: all is well with them, and all will be well with them both in time and eternity. And yet we often find such persons careful and troubled about many things. They listen to Satan, yield to unbelief, or judge of things by appearances, and the result is anxiety, vexation, and trouble. Beloved, let us make sure of reconciliation to God, let us endeavour to get and keep close to God, and then let us sing, "I will not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Why should we, for God will be our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble?

But there are some that ought to be troubled, they ought to tremble, and be anxious, for God tells them so. And yet such seldom are. They are careless, or very easy souls. Nothing seems to alarm them. They take most things as they come, and let them pass without much concern. There is an evenness about their disposition, and

an easiness of temper possessed by them. They have no faith in God's word, or fear of God's wrath. They are not depressed by doubts, or excited by hope. They may have a form of godliness, or they may not, just as it happens;—they certainly have no *real* godliness. They are in a false security. Careful for time, but careless about eternity. They look to the present, but leave the future to look to itself. They care for men, but care nothing for God. Such persons are often admired, for they are guilty of no glaring violations of the law, or open transgression of the commandments. They pass for good, moral, upright characters, and are the more esteemed by some because they make no serious profession of religion. They think that God is merciful, that he is satisfied with a decent exterior, in a word, that he is "altogether such an one as themselves." They cannot believe that the threatenings of God's word apply to them, or that it is at all likely that God will send them to hell; for if he does, what will become of the thousands whom they look upon as so much worse than themselves? Should any such read these lines, I would say to them, "Hear ye the word of the Lord," he speaks to you, he says,—"*Be troubled, ye careless ones.*" You are in danger, in imminent danger, and it is so much the greater because you do not perceive it. God's law requires what you have never rendered, and it threatens what you must endure, except you escape by a way of which at present you

seem to have no conception. Christ's gospel presents what you have never received, but you must receive it, or suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Your morality will not screen you. Your occasional attendance at the house of prayer, or performance of religious duties, will not secure you. You lie open on all sides to the thunders of God's law, and to the threatenings of Christ's gospel. Well, then, may you be called upon to be anxious, to think, to be concerned for your safety, to fear the wrath you have incurred, to pray for the pardon you need, to flee immediately to Jesus, and thus provide yourself with a shelter, a place of safety from the coming storm. Carless sinner, *think*. Easy soul, be *anxious*. Self-satisfied professor of religion, *tremble*. Wrath is coming. Danger is near. The storm is gathering. The heavens will soon gather blackness, the earth will soon reel to and fro like a drunkard, the Judge of all will soon appear, the judgment will commence, the books will be opened, and you will be judged out of those things which are written in the books. Those books contain an account of the state of your hearts, your secret thoughts, your private and public conduct, the motives which have influenced you, the rule that guided you, the ends you aimed at, every duty you have neglected, every sin you have committed, and especially *the greatest of all your sins*, your REJECTION OF THE SAVIOUR. What a record those books contain. What an exposure will

then be made. What surprise you will feel. What alarm will fill your soul. What dread will seize upon your spirit. What tremendous forebodings will agitate your heart. What an awful, unexpected portion will be assigned you. Tremble, then, ye careless ones. Be troubled, ye easy ones, who go on from day to day as if the law of God was repealed, as if the gospel was a fable, and as if the judgment was a mere bugbear to frighten the weak and timid. Ah, you will find it to be a fearful reality, and so much the more fearful because you have put away the thoughts of it from you!

"*Be troubled,*" for God bids you. He bids you in mercy. He bids you to be troubled now, that you may not be troubled for ever. May you be troubled with convictions of sin, with alarm on account of your danger, with concern to escape the sinner's doom, and to seek and find an interest in the dear Redeemer. You have slighted him long, but he is now willing to receive you. You have rejected his loving invitation, but he still says to you, "Come, and I will give you rest." Kind and gracious Saviour, he has long waited, that he may be gracious unto you; he is still waiting, that he may show mercy unto you. He looks upon you with pity, he speaks to you in words of kindness, he sends to you messages of tenderest love. "*Be troubled*" now, or you may be at death. Think, oh, think, how sad it will be, when heart and flesh are failing, when the muscles are relaxed, when the nerves are unstrung,

when the poor body is racked with pain, and just about to pass through the mortal agony, to have the soul troubled for its safety. To see itself exposed to the just wrath of an offended God. To feel itself just going to be forced into the presence of a rejected and insulted Saviour. To perceive that devils are waiting around the dying pillow, to seize the departing spirit and convey it to the regions where death, darkness, and despair for ever reign. *"Be troubled,"* for if you are not troubled now, you will be beyond the grave. Yes, when you see that you are excluded from hope, placed beyond the reach of mercy, and exposed to eternal misery, *by your own fault.* For it is this thought which will, like a never-dying worm, or never-wearied serpent, wound, distress, and agonize your immortal spirit. Oh, to think I was once in the land of hope; the sceptre of mercy was held out to me, but I would not touch it; God called me and exhorted me to come and reason with him, that my sins might be pardoned, and my soul saved, but I would not go to him. Oh, egregious folly! Oh, unparalleled stupidity! Oh, strange madness! But now it is too late, too late, too late, my doom is fixed, my fate is sealed, *I am lost entirely by my own fault!* Sinner, this is not true of you yet. Reader, you may escape from this justly to be dreaded doom. God calls to you,—Jesus invites you,—the Holy Spirit, by these lines, strives with you,—and the writer, with every true believer, unites to warn you, in-

vite you, and entreat you to flee from the wrath to come. Listen to the warning voice. Receive the gracious invitation. Yield to the kind entreaty. Flee, flee at once to Jesus. Seek safety at his cross. Seek a pardon from his hands. Seek a full, free, present, and everlasting salvation in his name. Salvation is a favour, and you may obtain it. It is a free gift, and God is willing to bestow it. It is a present blessing, and you may receive it. "Ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth, he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Pardon now is freely publish'd
Through a Mediator's blood,
Who hath died to make atonement,
And appease the wrath of God!
Wond'rous mercy!
See, it flows through Jesu's blood!"

A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The Lord helped me. PSALM CXVIII. 13.

THE psalmist had been reviewing his toils, his trials, and his dangers; he commemorates his deliverances, his conquests, and his triumphs; and he ascribes the whole to the help of God. If God had not helped him, his faith had failed, his expectations had been disappointed, and his foes had prevailed. Through the Lord he did valiantly; and now, with joyful heart, he records the loving-kindness of the Lord. How sweet to look back upon the rough road, the bloody battle-field, the scenes of peculiar trial, when we have arrived at some pleasant resting-place, enjoy peace within and around us, and see our trials as past exercises. Then, if ever, gratitude will work within us, and praises will flow from our tongues and pens. Delivered from the mouth of the lion, and the paw of the bear, we thankfully acknowledge, "*The Lord helped me.*"

In looking back we see that we have needed help and more help than any creature could afford us. The daily cross, the inward conflict, the domestic troubles, the perplexities of business, the state of the church, the affairs of the world, have all combined to teach us, that Divine help was necessary. If God had not helped us, we had fallen into sin, we had disgraced our profes-

sion, we had been crushed by our foes, we had fainted under our trials, we had apostatized from the faith. God only knows what would have been the result, if we had been left to our own resources. We needed help in infancy, in youth, in manhood; we needed help in prosperity and in adversity; we needed help in temporals and spirituals. We found our own strength to be weakness, and our own wisdom to be folly. The feeblest of our foes would have been more than a match for us, and the least corruption in our hearts would have overcome us. And we need help *now* as much as we ever did; for, except the Lord help us, our foes will yet triumph over us, our crosses will prove to be too much for us, and we shall faint in the day of adversity. We *feel* that we need help at present; we feel it in the field of labour, we feel it on the bed of sickness, we feel it in the church of God, and we feel it at the throne of grace.

The Lord has promised help. He has said, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." And because his people feel themselves to be vile, weak, and incompetent; because their foes despise them, scoff at them, and treat them with contempt, he stoops to speak to them according to their own views of themselves, and their enemies' representations of them, and says, "Fear not, I will help thee. Fear not, thou

worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." When the Lord helps, you see a worm can scatter mountains, and conquer the most formidable foes; and the Lord has promised thus to help the poorest, the meanest, the most despised of his people. Oh, precious promise, of a good and gracious God! It extends to all times, it embraces all circumstances, it belongs to all believers, and it ensures us a triumph over all our foes. Nor is it a solitary promise, only once made, only recorded in one place in God's book. No; it is repeated again and again. When his people fancied that he had neglected them; when their hearts were rising against him, and their mouths complaining of him, he comes forth to correct their mistake, to still their fears, and to silence their complaints. He refers to their knowledge of his character and perfections; to his constant dealings with his people; and promises not only to help them, but to do exceeding and abundantly above all that they could ask or think. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, 'My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?' Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not,

neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." This gracious promise, in all its glorious meaning, belongs to us. Let us understand it, believe it, plead it before God's throne, and expect its fulfilment.

The psalmist had sought help of the Lord. "In the day of my trouble, I cried unto thee." If God has promised, we should pray. The promises tell us what God is willing to do, and to give; but God intends that we shall believe his word, and apply to him for the needed blessing. When troubles drive us to the Bible, and to the throne of grace, they do us good; they are sanctified to us. This is the effect they are intended to have. Help may be had, but help must be sought. It is sometimes the case that we "have not, because we ask not, or because we ask amiss." God is willing to help us; but he says, "You shall feel that you cannot do without me; you shall come and ask me; you shall believe my word; you shall wait my time; and you shall receive the help you need in my way." We do not always understand what the Lord means, or we do not cheerfully submit to God's method; and therefore we are left for a time

without the needed, the desired, help. Let us endeavour to understand God's method, to approve of God's plan, to wait at God's throne, to watch in God's ways; and then, in reference to every trial, trouble, or conflict, we shall have to say, "*The Lord helped me.*"

Help had been received: not once or twice, but all through the writer's pilgrimage. But there were some special seasons in which the Lord displayed his power, and manifested himself as the hearer and answerer of prayer. Just so has it been with us. We have had daily help, for we could not live the Christian life without; but we have had special help in times of peculiar trouble and trial. We can look back with David to the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites to the hill Mizar. We can remember the lion, the bear, Goliath, and Saul. Times of peculiar danger were times when we received special help; and we may say with the apostle, "The Lord stood with me and strengthened me, and I was delivered." And again, "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." Where had we been now, but for supplies of the Spirit of Christ? but for special interferences of Divine Providence? but for the necessary communications of Divine strength? Yes, the strength of Jesus has been perfected in our weakness; we have found his grace to be sufficient for us, and to the praise of his glorious grace, in reference to all our trials, troubles, and conflicts, we can say, "*The Lord helped me.*"

Help is here gratefully acknowledged. The least we can do is to be grateful for the help we have received; and yet this is the very last thing which some think of; they pray, receive, and forget to acknowledge, except stirred up by some special event. Few Ebenezers are set up by some professors of religion on the road to glory; they but seldom sing with a grateful heart, "*The Lord helped me.*" Indeed, we are all defective here. Oh, that God would pour out upon all his people a spirit of gratitude, and not teach us the value of our mercies by the loss of them! The help we have received is only introductory to what our God intends to give; for his mercies are like a chain, and every link draws the next nearer to us, until we receive the crowning mercy, even life for evermore. Let us, therefore, look to the Lord as our helper; remember that he is a very present help in trouble; and endeavour to say boldly as the apostle directs us, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." What can man do that shall harm us, if God is with us, and for us? What is the power of the mightiest mortal if matched with Omnipotence? Oh, beloved, it is an unspeakable mercy to have God for our helper; and to be able to look back upon our past course, and trace the helping hand of God working for us, working with us, and working out our deliverances! Let us reflect upon past help, as Paul upon past deliverances, and draw the same conclusion as he did, "He who hath

helped us in time past, who doth help us at present, in him, we trust that he will yet help us.'' And if we honour the Lord by trusting him, he will be sure to honour us, by helping us under all our difficulties, and out of all our troubles. So that to us may be applied the language of Moses, the man of God, respecting Israel; "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, 'destroy them.' Israel shall then dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and of wine; also, his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

"Rouse, rouse, my soul, and fight thy way,
Should earth and hell oppose;
Though thou art not, thy Saviour is
A match for all thy foes.

Yes, thou art weak, but he is strong,
And will his strength impart;
He 'll teach thy feeble hands to war,
And cheer thy fainting heart.

A few successful struggles yet,
Then, not a conflict more;
Satan and sin shall ne'er assault
On the celestial shore."

THE SPIRIT OF LIFE.

ROMANS viii. 2.

ALL true religion is experimental, and all experimental religion is produced by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, most of the names and titles assumed by the ever blessed Comforter, in the Holy Scriptures, indicate his relation to us, and his work within us. We are under infinite obligation to him, and ought to realize our dependence upon him, and constantly endeavour to honour him. If we honour the Holy Spirit, he will honour us; but if we neglect or despise him, our religion will be formal, our gifts will wither, and we shall be of little use in the church of God. Paul is assuring the Romans, that consistent believers in Jesus are free from all condemnation; and assigns as a reason, that the everlasting gospel, which is the law of the Spirit of life, hath set them free from the legal covenant, which is the law of sin and death. Let us take some little notice of this title of the blessed Spirit.

He is *the Life-giving Spirit*. Life was given us by the Father, in the person of Jesus, before the world was; Jesus came into the world to suffer, bleed, and die, that we might have life, and have it abundantly; but it is the Holy Spirit that conveys the life that is in Christ to us,

and so quickens us from a death in trespasses and sins. He imparts a Divine and holy principle within us, in consequence of which we perceive our lost condition, pant for the favour and presence of God, and begin to seek the Lord with all our hearts. Religion now becomes a reality. We seek, and cannot rest without enjoying, the bread of life, and the waters of salvation. The one object of our desire is Jesus, and, to possess him is the one aim of the soul. This life breathes in prayer, acts in faith, works by love, and only finds rest in the enjoyment of God in Christ.

The Spirit not only implants life within us, but bestows all the comforts of life upon us. He leads us to submit ourselves to God, embrace the atonement, and be reconciled to our heavenly Father. Then peace is enjoyed in the soul, for God appears as our Friend. We can draw near to his throne. We perceive that his justice has been satisfied for our sins, that his mercy is honoured in our pardon, and that his grace will be glorified in every part of our everlasting salvation. We have nothing to fear from his wrath, we have every thing to expect from his love. The troubled spirit is now sweetly tranquilized. The weary soul finds rest. The wounded heart is healed. Joy springs up and flows forth, like streams from the smitten rock in Horeb. The inner man is happy. God is the health of our countenance. We rejoice, for our sins are pardoned. God is at peace with us, the whole

work of Christ is placed to our account, provision is made for all our wants, and we have nothing to fear, except sin. We now become active for God. We wish all to enjoy what we do. We desire to do something to honour that God who has done so much for us. We go to his throne and ask, "What wilt thou have me to do?" and, however arduous the employment, however mean the situation, whatever self-denial it may call for, we are willing to engage in it. Spiritual life will be active, more so than mere natural life. It will be active with God, in seeking blessings from him; and active for God, in endeavouring to bring honour to him. The peaceful soul, the happy heart, are prepared to be employed in God's vineyard, and find pleasure in observing his holy commands. The result is salvation. That is, deliverance from all that is dangerous in this world; and from all that is dreadful in the world to come. Salvation flows freely from grace, it is brought near to us by the precious blood of Jesus, but we receive, realize, and enjoy it, only under the gracious teachings of "the Spirit of life." Oh, thou ever blessed, and life-giving Spirit of God, fill me with divine life, make me lively in God's work and ways, and quicken millions of souls who are now dead in sin, that they may seek and find the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory!

He is *the Life-preserving Spirit*, or he preserves the life which he imparts. When he quickens us, he takes possession of us, and

having once taken possession, he never abandons us. When grieved by our conduct, he refuses to comfort us, assist us, or honour us, until we see our folly, feel our criminality, and return to the Lord with weeping and supplication. But he secretly preserves the principle, when he does not put forth his power within us. He preserves divine life in our souls, by many, various, and painful afflictions. Sometimes by sickness of body,—sometimes by trying dispensations of his providence,—sometimes by the wrath of men,—and sometimes even by the temptations of Satan. These things he employs and overrules to exercise our graces, to subdue our corruptions, to wean us from the world and to draw or drive us to a throne of grace. "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirits." He preserves us alive, if not lively, by the ordinances of his house. Sometimes the song of praise, sometimes the fervent prayer, sometimes the preached gospel, and sometimes the communion of saints, is employed by him to quicken or comfort us, to reprove or instruct us, to humble or elevate us. But his inward operations are the grand means of preserving our spiritual life. He reveals Christ to us, and stirs up our affections to go out after him. He exhibits sin in its own native deformity, and excites hatred and opposition to it. He stirs up our principles, draws forth our desires, and leads us to hold communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. Every thing is just what

the Holy Spirit makes it to us. Therefore, we sometimes find, that the very things which we thought would damp our zeal, inflame it; what we fancied would destroy our hope, strengthens it; what we feared would drive us from God, draws us closer to him; and what appeared likely to prove our destruction, turns to our salvation. Let us, then, eye the Spirit's operations, let us watch the Spirit's working, let us seek the Spirit's influences, and let us beware, lest we grieve the Spirit's love. He is the Spirit of life; and without his constant operations we cannot live holily, happily, or usefully.

He perfects the life he imparts. He nourishes it up unto eternal life. Having made the heart his home, he never abandons it. Having claimed the person, he keeps possession. Hence the apostle says, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. viii. 11.) So also, John, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John iii. 2.) Once more, Paul says, "Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself"

(Phil. iii. 20, 21.) Thus we see, that where the Holy Spirit is, there is spiritual life; and that the life he imparts, he nourishes, until the possessor of it rises up from the grave, in the exact likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, glorious privilege! Blessed, thrice blessed, Spirit of God, make our hearts thy home, thy temple, and thy glorious throne for ever!

Reader, have you received the Holy Ghost? Have you been quickened from a death in sin, to a life of righteousness? Does the Spirit of God *dwell in you?* There is no spiritual life without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and the Spirit of God does not dwell in us, if we have not been quickened to feel our need of Christ,—to seek an interest in Christ,—to receive Christ,—to live upon Christ,—and to consecrate ourselves to the praise and glory of Christ. The blessed Spirit always honours Christ; and, in order to this, he always humbles the sinner, and lays him in the dust. We must be nothing, that Christ may be all. We must live upon Christ, or perish without Christ. We must live like Christ, or we have not the Spirit of Christ. We must live for Christ, or we shall not be owned and acknowledged by Christ. "The Spirit of life" from God, must enter into us, new create us, conform us to Jesus, and consecrate us to his praise, or we shall perish for ever. Spirit of God, *now, now*, take full, entire, and everlasting possession of us, and preserve us to the coming and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF GRACE.

ZECH. xii. 10.

GRACE is one of the most beautiful words in God's book. The very sound of it is musical to the believer who understands it. It just meets our case, for it tells us that God is inclined to be favourable unto us; more, that he is prepared to shower down the richest blessings upon us; and that what he gives he gives freely, from the love of his own heart. Grace is favour shown to the unworthy, without any cause or reason, but what is found in God's own bosom. Grace never looks out of itself for a motive, but is its own motive. It dwells in all its fulness in Jesus, and is the glory of the gospel scheme. But we are not going to dwell upon grace itself, but to fix the eye upon the Holy Spirit, as called, "THE SPIRIT OF GRACE."

The Spirit is *the gift of grace*. One of its greatest gifts. Indeed, it has no greater. It gave Jesus, and it gives the Holy Spirit; these gifts are equal in value and importance, as they are equal in nature, power, and glory. Without Jesus we could have no deliverance from wrath, or title to heaven; and without the Holy Spirit we should never realize deliverance, or be made meet for glory. The Father promised the Spirit to his Son, and the Son bestows the Spirit upon his church.

and makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. The Father laid up our fortune in Jesus; Jesus has preserved for us all that the Father entrusted to him; but it is the Holy Spirit who makes known to us the wealth which our heavenly Father has laid up for us, and conveys the foretastes and earnests of it into our souls. Holy and blessed Spirit, daily bring down into our souls fresh and fuller supplies of grace from the Father and the Son!

The Holy Spirit *produces all our graces within us.* He is the root, and our graces are his fruits; hence we read, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." If we believe, it is through grace. If we love, it is because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. If we rejoice, it is in consequence of his revealing and applying the truth to our souls. When his influence is put forth within us, then we believe God's word, hope in his mercy, rejoice in his goodness, cleave to his cause, walk in his ways, and love his truth, his people, and himself. Religion is then happiness. Duties are then pleasant. Even the cross lays light upon our shoulders. But if he hide himself, withdraw his influences, and leave us to ourselves, we doubt and fear, fret and pine, kick and rebel, rove from thing to thing, and nothing will either please or satisfy us. We often question the past, are wretched at present, and dread the future. But when he puts forth his power in us again, our

graces shoot forth like bulbous roots in the spring, our sighs are exchanged for songs, our fears for fortitude, our doubts for confidence, and our murmurings for gratitude and love. We sink into the dust of self-abasement, admire the forbearance and longsuffering of God, condemn our own conduct, and wonder that we are out of hell. Then we take down our harps from the willows, and with a melting heart, a weeping eye, and a tremulous voice we sing, "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell." Our wilderness is now turned into an Eden, and our desert into the garden of the Lord. Come, Holy Spirit, come, and produce a spring season in our souls, for, with the church of old, we cry, "Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts; cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

The Holy Spirit is, emphatically, *the gracious Spirit*. All he does for us, and all he works within us, is of grace. His grace is his glory, and he glories in his grace. We may obtain his presence, and receiving his blessing in answer to prayer, but we can never deserve either, nor can we by any works we perform merit them. He graciously quickens the dead, instructs the ignorant, liberates the captives, restores the wanderers, comforts the dejected, strengthens the

weak, and sanctifies the impure. His work is his delight, and to see us holy and happy his pleasure. Nothing grieves him like neglect, indifference, and going back to the beggarly elements of this present world. Such conduct wounds his loving heart, grieves his kind and tender nature; hence it was said of Israel, "They vexed and grieved his Holy Spirit." And the apostle exhorts us, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."

Brethren, we need the Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of grace, to make us gracious and graceful Christians. We cannot live up to our profession,—we cannot copy the example of our beloved Master,—we cannot keep his command, or love one another as he has loved us,—we cannot sympathize with sinners around us as we should,—we cannot keep God's glory in view in all we do,—we cannot walk in high and holy fellowship with God,—we cannot meet death with peace and joy,—without "THE SPIRIT OF GRACE." Let us look up, therefore, to our heavenly Father, let us plead his precious promises, let us go in the name of the Lord Jesus, and let us entreat him to give us more of "the Spirit of grace." He is not backward to bestow, if we are willing to receive. He will not refuse to listen to us, if we are earnest, hearty, and importunate. He will grant us the blessing, if we seek it as that which is essential to our holiness and happiness, and to his honour and praise. His word warrants us to expect that he will give his Holy Spirit to

them that ask him. His nature and his name, encourage us to persevere in our application to his throne until we receive. Oh, for Jacob's spirit, that we may wrestle until we prevail! Oh, for David's power with God, that a messenger may be caused to fly very swiftly, to assure us that our prayer is heard! Oh, for the faith and fervour of the first Christians, that we may be all filled with the Holy Ghost and with power! Oh, for the fulness of "the Spirit of grace," to be poured out upon every member of the one church of Jesus, that we may all love each other, and endeavour, by all possible means, to glorify his name!

"Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,
Let us thine influence prove;
Source of the old prophetic fire,
Fountain of life and love.

Come, Holy Ghost, (for, moved by thee,
The holy prophets spoke,)
Unlock the truth, thyself the key,
Unseal the sacred book.

Expand thy wings, prolific dove,
Brood o'er our nature's night;
On our disordered spirits move,
And let there now be light.

God through himself we then shall know,
If thou within us shine;
And sound, with all thy saints below,
The depths of love divine."

AN ADDRESS TO A CHURCH IN A LOW CONDITION.

BELOVED FRIENDS,

I GREET you in his holy name, who is our life, our wisdom, our righteousness, and our all. Grace be with you from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Though I shall not be present with you, when you are met together for prayer, yet allow me for a few moments, to address unto you the word of exhortation. There are two subjects which I wish to bring before you, and impress upon your minds. Your welfare is connected with your attention to them, and I pray God, that my remarks may be made a blessing to you. O God, thou alone canst render human instrumentality efficient; put life, power, and unction, into what I now write; that thy name may be glorified, thy people benefited, and thy cause raised up from its low estate!

The first point to which I would call your attention is PRAYER. For this object you meet together, and it is almost impossible to over estimate its importance. There is great power in real prayer. It "availeth much." I have great faith in prayer, and am persuaded, that if we did but pray more, things would be very different with *us*, and with our churches. Nothing should make us doubt of success, if we enjoy a spirit of prayer, and feel drawn together

on purpose to plead with God for his presence and blessing. A few right hearted believers may do wonders, like Gideon's three hundred soldiers, if only banded together in the fear of God, and frequently meeting to wrestle with the Most High. The prayer of faith is all but omnipotent. "Whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." It engages God on our side. It brings down the Holy Spirit. It touches the hidden springs of man's nature. It alarms and conquers Satan. Hence said the Saviour, "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father, in my name, he will give it you." Pray then, and pray for your PASTOR. Pray that his sanctification may be deepened, that his qualifications for his work may be increased, that his love to souls may abound more and more, that his zeal for God may be greatly augmented, and that he may wisely feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood Yea, that he may travail in birth for souls until Christ be formed in them. Pray also for YOURSELVES. That you may put away from among you all anger, wrath, and prejudice. That you may be filled with holy love—united together in the strongest bonds, for the best purposes—strong in faith giving glory to God, and clad with zeal as a cloak. O my brethren, we want deeper spirituality, more entire consecration to God, more thorough devotedness to his cause, more singleness of eye to his glory, and more active industry in bringing sinners under the

sound of his word! What we want we should pray for, and while we ask for it in the name of Jesus, we should believe that our heavenly Father is willing to bestow it. He will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly. Pray for SINNERS. Alas! they pray not for themselves. We as believers in Jesus are to intercede for *all men*. Pray for the immediate conversion of those that attend with you, and by whom you are surrounded. Pray for them *so*, that if any one of them should come into your prayer meeting, he may see and feel from the very manner of your praying for him, that you wish him to be saved. Pray as if the salvation of sinners depended on your prayers. Pray as if you could have no peace, without sinners being converted to God. Pray as if you felt like Paul did when he said, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." Go to the Lord as if you had special business with him, and that business was *to beseech him to save souls;* and to save souls among you. I am persuaded that we have not half love enough to the souls of men. We have not half faith enough in the power of prayer. We are not half earnest enough with God. We do not pray as if we felt that souls are immortal, that immortal souls are perishing, that there is no help for them but in God, and that God has said to us, "I will be enquired of by you, to do these things for them." O if we did but realize this subject aright, exer-

cise faith in God's promise aright, pray for God's blessing aright, and act in God's work aright, he would send down his Holy Spirit to work wonders in our midst! His arm is not shortened, that he cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that he cannot hear; his Spirit is not straitened, that it cannot work; his love is not diminished, that it cannot sympathize; nor has his faithfulness to his word failed: but we "have not, because we ask not; or because we ask amiss." O let us arouse ourselves, shake off our sloth, and stir up ourselves to take hold upon God! He is not reluctant to bless, but he will have us cultivate proper dispositions of mind, and manifest that we are really in earnest in his cause. Pray for THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. All our confidence, all our hope, is in the presence, power, and operation of the Holy Spirit. Our preaching will be ineffectual, your efforts will fail, except the Holy Spirit be poured upon us from on high. If we do not honour the Holy Spirit, by pleading *for* him, by pleading *with* him, and by depending *upon* him, he will not honour us. For one of the immutable principles of the divine government is, "Them that honour me, I will honour; but they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed." Dear friends, let us honour the Holy and ever blessed Spirit. Let us plead with the Father, the promise which Jesus has given us, that he will send the Comforter, to work *for* us, to work *in* us, and to work *by* us Pray for the Holy Spirit in every prayer, and

pray until the Lord opens the windows of heaven, and pours out this blessing upon you. But beware, lest while you pray for the Spirit, you grieve that Holy Spirit, and keep him from among you. Pride, envy, prejudice, selfishness, covetousness, worldly-mindedness, or carnality will do it. Except you cultivate love to all saints, pity and desire to benefit all sinners, live above the present world, and act as those that are risen with Christ, you have no scriptural warrant to expect that God will confer this great, this invaluable blessing upon you. You will learn out in the school of bitter experience the truth of the psalmist's words, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer." If you hate whom the Lord loves, despise whom the Lord honours, keep apart from those whom the Lord admits to the closest communion with himself, simply because of some disagreement, or difference of opinion, you have no right to expect any great blessing to crown your efforts. Therefore "as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, *if any man* have a quarrel against any: *even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye:* and ABOVE ALL THINGS PUT ON CHARITY, which is the bond of perfectness."

Secondly, BE ACTIVE. Your pastor will be able to do little without you, but with you, though you be few and feeble, he may do much.

If you have large hearts, to love the many; warm hearts, to love fervently; and strong hearts, to love in spite of infirmities; you will be an honour to God's cause, a comfort to your pastor, and a blessing to all about you. Except your minister can point to you and say, "Ye are our epistle;" and except all men can read in your tempers, conduct, and conversation, the genuine effects of the gospel of Christ, little will be done. But if you are liberal, courteous, humble, diligent, persevering, and devoted to God; great things may be accomplished. By courtesy, by kindness, by evident devotedness to God, you may win over, and bring into fellowship with you, all true Christians around you, who have no settled home; and bring back into fellowship any who may have withdrawn from you. Such reunions are often very delightful; and the bone once broken, if well set, seldom breaks again in the same place. Seek to promote to the utmost of your power, the cause of God among you. Try every means you can command, to crowd your place of worship with immortal souls. Invite strangers, sabbath breakers, and sinners of every class, to come and hear the gospel with you. Go to those who neglect public worship altogether, and to those who only occasionally attend, on purpose to invite them to come with you. Go more than once, if you do not succeed the first time. Promise them a comfortable seat, and see that they have one if they come. Let them see that you feel an interest in them, that

you wish to do them good, that you aim at their salvation. Be not discouraged if some refuse, but make up your mind that the house of prayer is to be filled, to be filled soon, and to be kept full: do your utmost to accomplish so desirable an object. Let every member try how many he can induce to attend, and when they attend, offer up special prayer for their immediate salvation. While the servant of Christ is preaching the word, the prayers of the Lord's people should be ascending, that the Eternal Spirit may descend, and apply the truth with invincible power to the hearts of all that hear. No one can tell what he can do, until he tries; or say how useful God may make him. He often uses the weak things, to prove that his word is still true which says, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It is quite certain, that it is time that the Lord's church arose and shook herself from the dust, that every member tried to do something; to do more than he has been accustomed to do. Satan is doing all he can, papists are doing all they can, infidels are doing all they can; and shall "we sit still?" Shall we say, "I pray thee have me excused?" Surely no. Every one should be ambitious to do his part. No one can be excused, nor should any one wish to be. Brethren, the time is short, souls are perishing all around you, Jesus bids you work in his vineyard, and the night will soon come "in which no man can work." Think of

what God has given you, of what Jesus has done for you, of what the Holy Spirit has promised you in his blessed word, and of the grace that is to be brought unto you at the appearing of Jesus Christ; and let these things stimulate you to activity, and to entire devotedness to God. Act for God, and plead with God; this is the way to succeed in the cause of God. *Let some portion of each day* be set apart, purposely to pray for the Lord's blessing on his cause; and be assured that you will not, cannot, be losers by such a course. Remember, "The Lord turned the captivity of Job, *when he prayed for his friends.*" Our heavenly Father loves to see us come to him, to ask for his blessing on his own cause; and to hear us pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. It shows that we are of one mind with him, that we sympathize with his purpose, believe his promises, and desire to carry out his precepts. If therefore we would please God, if we would obey the Saviour, if we would honour the Holy Spirit, if we would fulfil our duties to the church, if we would be a real blessing to the world, and if we would prosper in our own souls, we must pray, work, and contribute, with a view to the increase and establishment of God's beloved church. Let us then listen to our God who says, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion." Let us imitate the apostle Paul, who said, "I am made all things to all men, *that I might by all means* SAVE SOME, *that I might* GAIN THE MORE." And let us be

stimulated by the language of the apostle James, who closed his loving epistle to the saints, by saying of the brother who aimed at the conversion of souls, "Let him know, that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, *shall save a soul from death*, and shall hide a multitude of sins." And is it possible, that *we* poor, feeble, and imperfect as we are, may be used in so glorious, so godlike a work? It is, and more than possible, it is certain. If our hearts are set upon it, if we cannot be satisfied without it, if we prayerfully aim at it, if we diligently pursue it, we shall never be disappointed, but shall be honoured to perform it. Spirit of God, stir up thy people to realize their responsibilities, to perceive the honour that is set before them, and distinguish themselves as the disciples of him, "who went about doing good;" and "who gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify us to himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works!*" Beloved, let us meditate on these things, let us pray over them, let us endeavour to practise them, and may "the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, the Lord give you peace."

"Before thy sheep, great Shepherd, go,
And guide into thy perfect will;
Cause us thy hallowed name to know,
The work of faith with power fulfil."

THE GLORIES OF CHRIST.

THERE is but one object that can be presented to a sinner's mind, that contains all that is needful for him, or delightful to him; and that is JESUS. In Jesus, he finds an infinite variety which is always pleasing and profitable; and the more he knows of the person and perfections of Immanuel, the more happy, holy, and useful will he be. To know Christ is true wisdom; to love him, is the evidence of grace; and to walk with him, is the highest honour that can be put upon a sinful creature. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to open the understanding to behold his glories, and to communicate to the soul the enjoyment of his love; and it is the delight of a truly spiritual mind to think of him, feed on him, and rejoice in him. There is nothing in Christ, but what is precious to him; there is nothing out of Christ, or that does not conduce to his glory, that is highly esteemed by him. Christ is the object of his faith, love, and desire; and the subject of his meditation, boast, and song in the house of his pilgrimage. To a Christian, Christ is all; by a worldling, Christ is despised and rejected; the former sympathizes with Jehovah the Father, who delights in him; the latter with the prince of darkness, who hates and belies him. The believer is knit to him, walks in fellowship with him, and desires above all

things to exalt and glorify him; he wishes he could bring the whole world to know, love, and adore him. Jesus is just suited to the believer, and he reflects on him with delight and satisfaction.

The PERSON of Immanuel is to him peculiarly glorious; here manhood and divinity are united, and God and man is one Christ. Here he beholds all the awful and amiable perfections of God, united to the sinless passions and affections of man: the glory of the former is softened by the latter, and the latter becomes dignified and glorious by the former. He demands our adoration, he invites our love; he may be trusted without fear, worshipped without idolatry, served without dread, and approached without alarm. To love him is the natural effect of knowing him, and adoration is always connected with this love. His very nature is love, he possesses a fulness of grace, and his heart overflows with mercy; his every act, word, and work as the Saviour is mixed with love, exhibits grace, and displays mercy. His compassion is unbounded, he is full of pity, and is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Love always reigned in his heart, and is the peculiar glory of his character; out of love to us he came into our world to bless us, and—

"This was compassion like a God,
That when the Saviour knew

The price of pardon was his blood,
His pity ne'er withdrew.

He sunk beneath our heavy woes
To raise us to his throne;
There 's ne'er a gift his hand bestows
But cost his heart a groan."

Jesus is glorious in the LOVE he displays in the salvation of his people. He freely fixed his heart upon them, and took an eternal delight in the idea of saving, honouring, and glorifying them. His love to them was the great cause of all he did for them; promised to them, or bestows upon them; and his love like himself remains immutably the same. It is not he did love, or he will love only, but he LOVETH: he always did, doth, and always will. All the perfections of his nature, and all the resources he has provided, are at the command of his love; and all will be manifested, and if necessary expended to do his people good. Love brought him from heaven to earth, that he might fill our place; love took him back to heaven, that he might plead our cause, and prepare for us a mansion; and love will bring him to earth again, that he may raise our dust, glorify our persons, and receive us to himself. Love never thinks it stoops too low, does too much, or conceives too highly of the beloved object; and the love of Jesus is glorified by the depth of his humiliation, the extent of his work, and the expressions of his estimation contained in his word. When

we look at the objects of his love in their poverty, rebellion, and wretchedness; at the price paid for them, the blessings bestowed on them, and the glory prepared for them; we may well exclaim, "What manner of love is this?" "Behold how he loved them!" His love is the spring from whence flows salvation, comfort, protection, holiness, and heaven; could his love be moved our souls were undone, our hopes were blighted, and all our bright prospects would perish; but here is its glory, it is always the same, as vigorous, as active, and as settled.

His love no end or measure knows,
No change can turn its course;
Immutably the same, it flows,
From one eternal Source.

The WORK of Jesus is glorious, he undertook to reconcile heaven and earth; to render Jehovah glorious in the eyes of his creatures, and the church glorious in the eyes of Jehovah. In our nature he performed all the conditions of the better covenant, and obtained all power and authority in heaven and in earth. He put away sin, conquered Satan, brought in everlasting righteousness, abolished death, and passed sentence on the world lying in wickedness. He conquered every foe, satisfied every claim, and ascended triumphant to heaven. His work the Father accepted, and accepts every sinner that embraces and depends upon it. His name was

sounded as the object of angelic adoration through the heavenly world, and is published as the ordinance of salvation through our miserable earth. Angels admire and wonder at his work, they love and adore his person; sinners who know their danger fly to his arms for refuge, rely upon what he has done, and glory in his adorable name; but too many, alas! close their eyes to his beauties, stop their ears against the proclamation of his grace, and perish in their sin. His work is honourable and glorious, and his righteousness endureth for ever. It is an eternal honour to himself, an honour to his Father's throne, and an honour to his people, too: all who know it, trust it; all who trust it, find peace and joy in believing it. It is our song in the house of our pilgrimage, our comfort in the article of death, our title to mansions in the skies, and will be our boast and glory for ever.

His DISPOSITION, as manifested in his conduct when on earth, and since seated at the right hand of power, is truly glorious; unbounded kindness, unparalleled meekness, and exquisite tenderness, shine in all his dealings with his people. Toward poor sensible sinners he manifests incomparable gentleness, longsuffering, and the patience of a God; he receives them graciously, loves them freely, and forgives them heartily. He has never left room for one to doubt the kindness of his heart, the power of his arm, or the faithfulness of his word; and if he had never invited us to him, or promised to receive us, yet

if we knew the kindness of his disposition we could not despair. He forgets past injuries when the sinner confesses at his throne; and receives to his bosom, even those who had spurned at his grace. He receiveth sinners, and rejoices at the return of the lost sheep to the fold.

His NAMES are precious, they sparkle in the believer's eye, and fall like sweet music on the ear; there is a glory and excellence in them, not to be found in others. He is called JESUS, because he came into the world to save sinners: he loved, laboured, suffered, bled, died, rose, ascended, and intercedes to save his people from their sins. His merit is the price he paid, his gospel the instrument he uses, his Spirit the agent he sends, his power the attribute he employs, to accomplish the purpose so near to his heart. He will save, he will rest in his love, and will rejoice over his people with singing. He is called CHRIST, because anointed by the Father to be the Mediator between God and man: he stands between earth and heaven, between justice and mercy, between the sinner and his Maker's wrath. He presents satisfaction to God, he presents salvation to man; he gives God his demands, and the sinner a supply for all his wants. The sinner looks to Jesus for acceptance, and God looks to Jesus to maintain the honour of his throne; the sinner is received and Jehovah is glorified. He is called IMMANUEL, God with us; to show us that God can dwell with us, and manifest himself unto us. He is

God in human nature, in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; thus he brings all the attributes and perfections of God to the great work of salvation. How then can we fear, when he is able and willing to save to the very uttermost? Able, because God; willing, or why was he made flesh to dwell among us? His arm is omnipotent, his merit is infinite, and his mercy inconceivably great. He is near of kin unto us as man, our Brother; bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh: his heart is set upon us as God, for he loves us with an everlasting love. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us."

His OFFICES render him glorious in the believer's eye, and dear to the believer's heart. He is in office for us, for our salvation, peace, and satisfaction. He is a PROPHET, who possessing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, condescends to instruct the ignorant sons of men. He opens to our view the mysteries of redeeming mercy, and discovers the glorious designs of sovereign grace. He teaches man his true condition, and discovers to him how God can be just and the justifier of such a sinner as he feels himself to be. He is a PRIEST, who has made an atonement for the guilty by offering one all-sufficient sacrifice to God, and has entered into the holy place ever living to make intercession for us. He reconciled us to God, by his expiating death, and saves us by his life of intercession. He presents our prayers, persons, and

sacrifices to God; making them acceptable by the incense of his merits. He is a KING, who receives the returning rebel, and grants a pardon; who rules over his people by his love and his laws; and defends all who trust him from danger and death. He rules *over* mankind, and *in* the believer; and is KING of kings and LORD of lords. As a Prophet he saves from ignorance and error; as a Priest from guilt and condemnation; as a King from dangers and foes. In these offices the sinner finds all he needs, and the believer loves his Saviour in each; he would be a scholar as well as a dependant, a subject as well as a son; he cannot dispense with the lesson, the sacrifice, or the sceptre, but learns of his Master; trusts in his Saviour; and obeys his King.

His RELATIONS endear him to the Christian's heart, and add to the glories he wears. He is the FATHER that receives the poor returning prodigal, and pities his spendthrift children when reduced to destitution. Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jesus pitieth them that fear him; he knoweth their frame, he remembereth that they are but dust. He is a BROTHER born for adversity, to relieve, acknowledge, and raise, the degraded family of God. He raises the poor from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill; he deals out his bread to the hungry, provides a garment for the naked, and receives the out-cast home. He not only wears our nature, but has our interests at heart. He is the HUS-

BAND who brings us into marriage-union with himself, provides for all our necessities, supplies all our wants, and assures us of his unalterable love. He gives us his arm to support us, his fulness to supply us, his name to entitle us, his robe to cover us, his angels to guard us, his word to assure us, and his heaven to be our habitation at last.

"He is my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King;
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
To whom my praise I bring."

His glories appear in the numerous and appropriate COMPARISONS employed to set him forth. He is THE CITY OF REFUGE that receives the poor sinner who flies from the avenger of blood, the gates are always open, the way is made plain, and the gracious assurance is given, "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out; but he shall dwell in safety and be free from fear of evil." Threatened vengeance may terrify while at a distance from Jesus, but at his feet there is safety, and peace at his cross. As the TOWER of strength he protects from the army that invades and supplies with provision the necessitous and distressed. No officer can arrest us, no foe can overcome us, no danger can harm us, if sheltered in Jesus the sinner's STRONG HOLD. His name is a strong tower into which the righteous run and are safe; for then they dwell on high, and the place of their defence is the muni-

A WORD TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

THAT real religion is of the greatest importance, that it cannot be possessed too early, that it is generally produced by the power of the Holy Spirit attending the well-directed efforts of his people, are truths generally admitted by the Lord's people; but though generally admitted, they are not realized so powerfully as they should be. They do not influence our conduct as they ought. If they did, we should be daily studying how we may present truth to the mind in the most attractive form, and impress it on the heart in the most powerful manner. We should live to spread the truth, and bring immortal souls under its influence. Our prayers should be more pointed, powerful, and frequent, and our efforts should be more direct, serious, and sustained. My dear friends, let us enter on a new course. Let us seek to be filled with the Holy Ghost and with power, to be daily "anointed with fresh oil," to be entirely devoted and consecrated to God and his service. Let us seek to be influenced by his love, to be ruled by his word, and to be useful in bringing sinners to his throne. How little some of us have done for God hitherto; let us therefore seek to be doubly diligent in the future. Our opportunities to do good must be fewer, they may be very few. Let us gather up

the fragments of time which are left us, and employ them for God and the good of souls; especially in endeavouring to win the souls of the young for Jesus. They may prove better servants, more obedient children, more successful labourers than we have done. O to be instrumental in training up a wise, holy, and successful agency, to be employed in the Lord's Church, for the Saviour's honour and the salvation of sinners, when we slumber in the quiet grave!

Parents and heads of families, seek to bring your children and dependents to Jesus. Set your hearts upon this. Make this your daily prayer. Be on the look-out for opportunities to place truth before them, and carefully avoid every thing that would stumble them, or prejudice them against the gospel. Show them that your religion is a reality, a glorious reality. That it makes you happy; that it makes you holy; that it makes you like the Lord Jesus Christ; that it fills you with concern for others; and with a desire to make all about you as holy and as happy as yourselves. Teachers, do the same things. Be sure that you are in Christ; that the Holy Spirit dwells in you; that you have passed from death unto life. Live in close and daily fellowship with God. Make the salvation of your children your great object. Long for it. Labour for it. Pray for it. Rest not satisfied without it. Begin anew from this time. Begin as you never began before. Begin in the Lord's strength. Set apart special seasons to plead at

the Lord's throne. Teach as you never taught before. Be determined to interest your charge in the things that belong unto their peace. Live to bring children to Christ. Never lose sight of your class, either on week day, or Lord's day. Let every child have a place in your heart. Pray for every child by *name*, and lay before the Lord all you know of its faults, desires, connexions, hindrances, and endeavour to bring down the Holy Spirit into every child's heart. Make thorough work of it, determined that if any of your children leave your class in an unconverted state, it shall not be for want of prayer, or direct effort to prevent it. Let us all be up and doing. The time is short. The work is great. The consequences are most solemn. Our responsibility is weighty. Souls are perishing: brethren, to the rescue! Men of Israel, help! Satan is busy, his agents are busy, and let us be busy too. By every possible means, in every possible way, let us labour to save souls from death. The work is glorious, and the reward will be great, for "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever" (Deut. xii. 3). "He that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. xi. 30).

Let it also be our endeavour to interest the young in the spread of God's truth through the world. The present is the age of missions. Every church should be a missionary church, and every church member a missionary to those

that are without. But while we must not neglect home, we must not lose sight of the millions of the heathen, who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. By pleading with God to raise up holy and gifted men to go forth unto them; by beseeching him to bless and succeed those who are gone; by meeting together to wrestle with God for them; and by large, generous, and regular contributions to the cause, let us show our interest in, and attachment to, the missionary cause. In addition to these things, let us spread missionary intelligence,—especially among the young. JUVENILE MISSIONARY MAGAZINES are now published, let them therefore be put into the hands of all our young people. There are schools into which they have not yet been introduced; let them, then, be introduced immediately. There are but few children who cannot find a halfpenny per month; and let those few who cannot, be supplied gratuitously. Every child who can read, should read missionary intelligence. Every church member, also, should introduce it into his family, and endeavour to interest each child in the missionary cause. Friends of the heathen, direct your attention to the juvenile classes, and endeavour to enlist their sympathy in the missionary cause. Sunday school teachers, unite, and make one grand effort to circulate among your children missionary intelligence. Parents, place the little Missionary Intelligencer in the hands of your beloved children, and thus teach them to feel for the woes

of the children of heathen lands. Disciples of Jesus, use these little heralds as your tracts for children; carrying them in your pockets that you may give them where you visit, to the children who would otherwise never see them. May the Holy Spirit make missionaries of us all, by filling us with the love of Jesus, pity for perishing sinners, and zeal for the glory of God. May he come down upon us in all the fulness of his graces and gifts, and enable us to live to God, labour for God, and thus adorn the doctrine of God more than we have hitherto done. There is nothing that the church so much needs at this juncture, as the coming down of the Holy Spirit in his power, grace, and quickening operations; for this, therefore, let us plead with God, on this let us steadily set our hearts, without this, let nothing satisfy us. O may the Lord favour Zion, may the veil be taken away from the heart of the Jew, and indifference from the heart of the Gentile, and the idols be utterly abolished. Oh, to see idolatry vanish away, Mahometanism expire, and Popery consumed by the bright and glorious rising of the Sun of Righteousness! Lord, hasten it, hasten it in thy time!

"Come saints and adore him, come bow at his feet,
O give him the glory, the praise that is meet;
Let joyful hosannas unceasing arise,
And join the full chorus that gladdens the skies."

SALVATION BY GRACE.

By grace ye are saved. EPHESIANS ii. 5.

SALVATION is confessedly a matter of the last importance,—a matter in which we are all interested; but yet it is a subject which is much neglected. Not but there is much said and written about it; but how few are there who seriously and heartily inquire, How are sinners saved? From what does salvation arise? In what channel does it flow? To what end is it directed? If we come to the inspired volume for instruction upon this momentous subject, if we come as little children to learn what God the Holy Spirit says upon the point, we shall meet with all necessary information: these sacred pages reveal all that is necessary to be known for our comfort, satisfaction, and direction. The Apostle Paul, who received his divinity from heaven, and was taught it by the immediate revelation of Jesus Christ, twice in one chapter informs us, that *it is by favour we are saved;* for what is grace, but simply the favour of God —the favour of God manifested without regard to desert or deservings? And it is as clear from the word of God, as the shining of the sun at noon, that unless we are saved as an act of favour, we can never be saved at all. What have we to recommend us to the notice of a

holy God, or what can we do to entitle us to so great a blessing? If the least good quality were demanded, we have it not; if any good work were prescribed, we could not perform it: but it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Salvation is by *favour freely shown.* The Lord fixed upon the objects whom he intended to deliver from sin, Satan, and the curse; and whom he designed to raise to holiness, happiness, and honour. There was nothing to incite him but his own infinite love, and he assigns no reason but his sovereign good pleasure. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." He chose his people from the vast mass of the creatures; he named them, and recorded their names in the book of life. He gave them to our dear and adorable Immanuel, to be his care, charge, and bride. He appointed them to life, sonship, and conformity to Jesus, and all of unbiassed favour. Desert, or creature excellence, was left out of the question, when Grace sat upon the throne, and exerted her sovereign rights. The favour that benefited the one, neither directly nor indirectly injured the other; grace scatters her blessings upon millions, but never utters a curse against any. She provides salvation for her objects, but is in no sense the cause of the damnation of the rest.

Her language is SAVE; but never DESTROY. She hath filled thousands of hearts with life, holiness, and love, and as many tongues with praise; but never gave occasion to any to reflect upon her right, or to accuse her of unkindness. Grace, or favour, rightly viewed, embodies every thing that is sweet, pleasant, charming, and delightful: it is like music to the ear, honey to the palate, beautiful prospects to the eye, and fragrance to the smell. Free as the summer breeze, pure as the sun's bright ray, and pleasant as the morning light; all who know it love it, all who have seen admire, and all who enjoy adore. It finds a depth for our sins, a fountain for our wants, a covering for our persons, and a heaven for our eternal habitation. Oh that heaven would coin language sufficiently grand, and furnish ideas sufficiently noble, to speak of the glories of grace, or show forth half its praise!

Salvation is by *favour wisely displayed.*—Our gracious God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence. Grace has wisely contrived a plan which secures all the glories of Deity, frustrates the designs of devils and opposing men, highly exalts its divine and glorious agent, and exactly suits the poor sinner's case;—a plan calculated to fill the minds of cherubim and seraphim with wonder and admiration, and redeemed sinners with never-ending praise;—a plan which discovers more of the divine perfections, and displays more of the divine glories than was ever known or seen before, or than we

have any reason to conclude ever could have been through any other means. Justice receives its due, mercy is prodigal of her favours, majesty is honoured in the highest, and love is shown to be of immeasurable extent. Heaven resigns its chief attraction, that earth might be visited, and man redeemed. Jesus descends to save, to suffer, and to die: he honours the requiring precept, pays the dreadful penalty, and ascends a glorious conqueror to the skies. He is invested with the rectoral government of the universe, clothed with all power in heaven and in earth, furnished with the archives of eternity, that he may sanctify, discipline, and glorify his people. The Spirit assumes office, the storehouse of eternity is thrown open, a throne of grace is erected, and the glorious glad tidings are published, that the objects of grace may be accomplished. No sin is sanctioned, no right forfeited, no attribute tarnished, no consistent relation dissolved; but a revenue of glory to Jehovah is secured, in the execution of this glorious plan. Well may the Psalmist pray, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour thou bearest unto thy people; oh visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen, rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance."

Salvation is by favour *exerting divine power*. —All the attributes of Deity are in concert with grace, and join in the glorious work of saving poor sinners. The omnipotence of Jehovah is

ready to second the designs or accomplish the purposes of grace; and salvation is wrought in the soul by the power of God, which subdues the stubborn will, breaks the hard heart, elevates the earth-bound affections, and turns the current of the soul. In vain had Jesus shed the blood of his heart, unless he exerted the power of his arm; for such is the stupid, hardened, and death-like condition of man, that he will not regard the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. All had remained obdurate, and perished in their sin, if Jesus had in every sense finished his work upon the cross; but the atonement accepted, secures the presence and energy of the Holy Spirit, to quicken, convert, and sanctify the blood-bought people. The Father looks to the cross for satisfaction, the Spirit leads the sinner there for sanctification, and peace is realized and enjoyed when faith receives the atonement. But powerful must be that agency, and strong those principles, which lead from self to Jesus, from sin to holiness, from the world to the cross of Christ: that agency is the Spirit Jehovah, acting in honour of the Redeemer's ransom; those principles are from above, and are styled a new creation. Both the one and the other are necessary to accomplish the design of grace; and both are secured through the infinite merit of Immanuel's death. Oh, admirable plan! how perfect, how glorious, and complete! Satan had still held his captives, and the world would have claimed her vassals, but for the ex-

ertion of the power of God; but now the strong man is conquered, all that is in the world is overcome, and Grace sets her children free, yea, and makes them *free indeed.*

Salvation is by *favour conferring blessings.*—Salvation is one vast blessing, which, like the rod of Moses, swallows up all other blessings in itself. It is not the payment of a debt, but the conferring of a favour. "He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." All we are, and all we shall be, flows from favour: conviction of sin, a sense of danger, the cry of want, the longing for freedom, the appetite for righteousness, the confession of guilt, wrestling at the throne, the good tidings of pardon, the enjoyment of liberty, the witness of the Spirit, the unutterable groan, and the delightful cry of Abba, my Father and my God,—all flow from favour, and are but effects produced by rich and sovereign grace. Every blessing necessary for time or eternity is included in the word, "salvation." Grace hath provided, promised, and proclaimed all blessings to all who believe in Jesus: faith evidences our right to all the blessings of the covenant, all the merit of the Son of God, and all the privileges of the everlasting gospel.

Salvation is by *favour commanding obedience.*—Grace is the expression of the favour of an infinitely holy God, and therefore cannot in any

sense sanction sin. It requires obedience, not as a term of life, or to procure a title to heaven; but to evince our gratitude to God, out of love to the Lord Jesus,—to prove the power and purity of our principles, and to benefit society. Grace removes sin meritoriously by the sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross, and efficaciously by the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. She hates sin above all things,—it is abhorrent to the very nature of grace, and therefore it is strictly prohibited, and invariably corrected. The *doctrines* of the gospel exhibit grace in its supremacy, majesty, and glory,—the *promises* in its liberality, forethought, and bounty,—and the *precepts*, in its hatred to sin, its holiness, and righteousness. That which tolerates or sanctions sin is not the grace of God; grace breaks the heart for it, leads us to hate and forsake it, and to sigh and cry for perfect freedom from it. The commands of grace are imperative, necessary, and salutary; they are intended for our good as much as the promises, and should be loved equally with them. He that trifles with the commands knows but little of the power of the promises, or the energy of the doctrines: for these rightly known and experimentally enjoyed, produce love to holiness, and concern to glorify God, by observing all his statutes. Grace on the throne produces sanctification of heart; and grace in the heart produces holiness of life. We look to the doctrines for instruction,—to the promises for support,—and to the precepts for direction; and honour grace in each.

Salvation, then, originates in the free grace of God, flows in the channel of the Redeemer's blood, and aims at the glorification of Jehovah in all his persons and perfections. It was planned in eternity, executed in time, and shall be realized and enjoyed until eternity can end. It is divine in its contrivance, execution, and application,—holy in its character, tendency, and design,—and free in its bestowment, operations, and fixation. It is of God, by faith, to holiness, for ever. Art thou saved? Has the grace of God brought salvation to you? Is your heart changed, your will renewed, and your conscience purified and made tender? Do you love holiness, hate sin, walk uprightly, fear God, and aim at the honour of Jesus in all you do? Do you groan, being burdened with inward corruption, live by faith on the Son of God, watch against temptation, resist Satan, conquer the world, and look for glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life? Is Jesus precious, grace delightful, mercy sweet, and your conversation in heaven? The opposite of salvation is *damnation*, and as salvation is entirely of grace, damnation is entirely of works: God alone is the author of the former, man alone is the author of the latter. Justice punishes for sin and only for sin. Every man digs his own hell, fixes the amount of his own torment, and goes to perdition with a fixed determination. He closes his ear and heart against the gospel, turns his back upon the way of life, chooses and pursues the way of death. He manifests a decided

opposition to God, in every thought of his heart and action of his life; and says, "Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Oh, sinner, God notices thy contempt, regards thy infidelity, and will surely bring thee into judgment! Think of thy imminent danger, stop in thy dangerous course, call upon God for pardon, flee unto Jesus for life, and strive to enter in at the strait gate! The door of salvation is open, the way of escape is at hand, and salvation with all its blessings may be enjoyed: for "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Oh taste and see, that the Lord is good! Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; for our God will abundantly pardon. The Lord give you to know, enjoy, and confess this to be the case, to the glory of his grace.

"Salvation! O the joyful sound!
'Tis pleasure to our ears!
A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears.

Buried in sorrow and in sin,
At hell's dark door we lay;
But we arise by grace divine,
To see a heavenly day.

Salvation! let the echo fly
The spacious earth around;
While all the armies of the sky
Conspire to raise the sound!"

HAVE I BEEN BORN AGAIN?

A MORE important question cannot engage my attention, or employ my time; for Jesus has said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). As, therefore, I wish to be a subject of God's kingdom on earth, and in heaven; and as I cannot without a new birth, let me carefully examine myself, and endeavour to ascertain if I have been born again. I frequently fear I have not, because my heart is so depraved, my passions are so strong, my walk is so uneven, and Satan so often gets the mastery of me. My fears are very painful, they weaken my faith, agitate my mind, and disturb my plans. But I would rather fear, if I am right; than live in calm and serenity, if I am wrong. Lord, search me. Lord, help me to examine myself. Lord, decide the doubtful case for me. Lord, set me right, and then keep me right.

Those who are born again are convinced of sin, concerned about sin, flee to Jesus to be saved from sin, and have their hearts set against sin. How is it with me? I see and feel every day that I am a sinner; sin often fills me with the deepest concern; I do look to Jesus as the only sacrifice for sin, and cry to him to save me from the guilt, power, love, and consequence of sin; and I feel, at least at times, hatred to sin,

to all sin. But, alas, I feel that sin has still great power in my heart, it works in my imagination, conscience, will, and affections; it appears in my looks, words, and conduct. It is too strong for me, I cannot subdue it, or free myself from it. Never did the Publican's prayer suit any one better than it does me at this moment, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Some sins I always hate, and all sin in others, but there are some sins to which I feel my heart secretly inclining. My whole soul is not set against all sin in myself, at least not at all times; and, in consequence of this, I often doubt, fear, and give way to unbelief. Oh, how painful the suspicion which now arises in my heart, "If I should find out at last that after all my profession, after all my religious enjoyments, and after I have preached to others, that I am not born again, and therefore am a castaway." The supposition is dreadful, the doubt seems to pierce one's very vitals. O Jesus, thou searchest the reins and the heart; thou knowest, oh, let me know, if I am born again!

Those who are born again, pray without ceasing. They have such a feeling sense of their necessities, such a view of the Redeemer's fulness, and feel a principle working within them, which urges them to approach the throne of grace. How is it with me? I cannot live without prayer. I pray at set times, and I pray in almost all places, and at almost all times. But my prayers are often so short, so lifeless, so

powerless, that though I use no form, they appear to be no better than form. Pray I must, but I am often impelled by fear, led by a sense of duty, and go to it in a mere customary manner. It is often a task, a burden, and sometimes it is even wearisome. Can I be born again? But if I am not, should I pray at all? At least, would it seem to be natural to me to pray? Should I approach the Lord, as I often do, without ceremony, and commence telling him my tale of woe, and asking his blessing and interference, without any introduction? Do the unconverted do this? Where the life of God is not in the soul, is this, can this be the case? Holy and ever blessed Spirit, thou knowest my real case, my true condition, discover it to me. If I am regenerate, banish my doubts, disperse my fears, inspire me with confidence, and bear thy own witness with my heart, "that I am born of God."

Those who are born again love the saints, all the saints; and the loving John has written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Well, I do love many of the saints, but do I love all that I know? I love those who are with me, and are kind to me; but do I love those who differ from me, and who treat me unkindly? Do I love a saint in rags? Do I love a believer in sickness and destitution? Do I love the poor, illiterate, uncultivated, more repulsive, of the people of God? Do I love saints because they

are saints, and just in proportion to their resemblance to the Lord Jesus Christ? Alas, I sometimes fear that I love something in them besides the image of Christ, and love them for something, also, besides their saintship. How difficult I find it to love some of them at all. How I can dwell upon their faults, and speak of their failings. I feel jealous of some, and I envy others. Would this be the case if my heart was sound in God's statutes? Then I am so changeable towards them, sometimes I love them so warmly, and feel as if nothing was too good to give them, or too arduous to undertake for them; but at another time I have nothing to bestow, nor any inclination to serve them. Oh, thou heart-searching God, examine me, I pray thee, and let me know, am I, or am I not, born again?

Those who are born again love the Saviour. This is often my brightest evidence. I do find Jesus precious. There is music in his name. There is adaptation in his mercy, merit, and word, to my circumstances. I love to hear him exalted, and to exalt him myself. I never feel as if I could think highly enough of him, or speak of him so as to show forth half his excellencies. But, then, do I love him for what he is in himself, and for what he has done for others? or is mine only selfish love, arising from a persuasion that I am a favourite, that he has saved me from hell, and will bring me to heaven? Besides which my love is so fluctuating, at

times I seem to love many inferior things more than him, my heart is hard as a stone, my affections are cold as winter, and I can perceive little if any difference between myself and the worldling, or those who are clearly only mere professors. Though at other times I find my heart warm at the mention of his name, and glow when his praises are sung. Oh, that the love of Jesus did so fill my heart, inflame my affections, regulate my actions, and consecrate my life, that it would be impossible for me to doubt whether I loved him sincerely, constantly, and consistantly, or no! I sometimes think that if I have not loved Jesus I never have loved any one; if I do not love him now I love no one. But I want certainty. Eternity is so solemn. Hell is so dreadful. Heaven is so glorious. Death is so near. Delusions are so powerful. Mistakes are so common. Therefore I want the indubitable proof, the unquestionable evidence, the living, abiding witness within and without me, that I am born of God. Oh, holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons in One God, I beseech thee to decide for me, and register that decision by the finger of the Holy Spirit upon my conscience, *am I born again?*

Reader, I have opened my heart to you. I have told you my case. I have unfolded my concern. I have showed you my desire. I have confessed my imperfections. I have made known my anxieties. How is it with you? Do you ever feel thus? Have you any sympathy with

me in my hopes and fears, my desires and doubtings, my pains and pleasures? It is a solemn, most solemn subject, for if we are not born again, *we cannot be saved.* Heaven will be barred against us. Hope will fly from us. Despair will brood over us. The burning lake will receive us. Indescribable torments will be awarded to us. Devils and lost souls will be our miserable companions. God will be our enemy, our irreconcilable enemy for ever and ever. Oh, let us, then, while we have the opportunity, search our own hearts, cry to the Lord for mercy, nor rest satisfied until we can say, "We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

Ah, grant me, Lord, in death to find,
That death is swallowed up in thee,
While on thy loving breast reclined,
I gasp for immortality,
Purchased by thine expiring groan,
And feel it in my heart made known.

Ah, Saviour, now in me reveal
Th' eternal life thou dost bestow,
And when my mortal foe I feel,
I 'll trample on my mortal foe,
Into thine hands my spirit give,
And long as my Redeemer live.

THE WAY TO SUCCEED.

They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. ISAIAH xli. 6.

IF the object had been good, the conduct would have been excellent. As it is, it reads us a lesson, and presents us with an example. Let us endeavour to learn the one, and copy the other. Here is a sinking cause, but a courageous people. They were not to be cowed. They would not easily give it up. They would not resign without a struggle, and a desperate struggle too. All went to work, and kept at work. They united their efforts, and concentrated their energies. They watched over each other to assist and encourage. None were overtaxed, because all were ready to help. None were allowed to give up, because each encouraged the other. Thus idolatry spread, and thus idolatry was sustained. Idolators are generally linked together; and their determined efforts to support a bad cause, is a pointed and powerful reproof to us. Let Christians but do as they did, and our little churches would increase, our sinking churches would rise, and the gospel would spread and be successful. God prospers the industrious. He blesses the loving, united, well-directed efforts of his people. He ever honours those who thus honour him.

Here is a church in a low condition,—its members are few, its resources small, its hopes feeble, and its friends are discouraged. What is to be done? Give up? Never! Are there differences? Settle them. Are there strifes? End them. Are there jealousies? Bury them. Is there any bad feeling? Let each one act upon Matt. v. 23, 24. Let brother *go to brother*, and seek instantaneous reconciliation. Let no one fear he shall stoop too low. Let no one refuse to bend. Let every one endeavour to carry out the Saviour's own command, "Love one another, *as I have loved you.*" The love of Jesus was a strong affection,—it was free from prejudice. It was a love that pitied the weak and erring,—that could bear with the ignorant and uncultivated,—that could forgive the unkind and guilty,—and that breathed pure benevolence toward all. He loved the most imperfect of his people, and loved them back from all their erring ways. Let us strive to imitate this love. It is our duty, for Jesus commands us. It is our happiness, for the very essence of holiness is in it. It is our honour, for hereby we resemble our Lord, and prove ourselves his disciples. Is all peaceful? Let all be really united. Daily meet around the cross. Often meet together for prayer and praise. Let each one set his heart upon raising the cause. Pursue this object as a prize. Keep it constantly before the eye. Let every one work, and every one help his neighbour.

Give *time* to the business. Do not say, I have no time to spare. Your time is the Lord's. It is to be consecrated to him. It is to be used for eternity. Time, judiciously given to God's cause, and spent in God's work, can never be lost. Nor will any one on a sick bed, on a dying pillow, or before the judgment-seat of Christ, regret that he has spent so much in God's service. If a neighbour's house was on fire, we should find time to help to extinguish it. If a friend's child had fallen into the river, we should find time to endeavour to rescue it from a watery grave. If we saw a herd of cattle destroying a relative's corn, we should find time to drive them out and close the gate. And shall we say, when souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, when the cause of God is declining for want of energetic action and hearty co-operation among its members, "You must excuse me, for I have no time?" Oh, no! let us be honest, let us speak the truth, and say, "*I have no heart.*" For if the heart was right, if the heart was in the work, the time would be found. Give *property* to the cause, and give in the proportion that is required. God claims your property. He says, "The silver and gold are mine." He has made you stewards. You are to give of the Lord's money, to the Lord's cause, just in proportion to what you are entrusted with, and what is required. The Lord does not require you to hoard for him. Some have saved in life, to endow the Lord's cause at death; but the Lord has very

seldom let his blessing rest upon such endowments. They are more fequently a curse than a blessing, a hindrance than a help. You are to spend for God, what you receive from God. Lay your property beside your coffin, and ask, When I lie in that narrow house, what part of my property will tell upon my best interests, that which I have spent for the furtherance of God's cause, or that which I have hoarded for myself and family? Never let God's cause want, or God's poor starve, while you have any of God's property in your hands. Too many professors say, "It is not in my power to give," when they should say, "*I have not the heart to give.*" They say, "*I cannot;*" but if they were thoughtful and honest, they would say, "*I will not.*" Give your *influence* to the work. Influence, rightly employed, is more than time, it is more than money; but he who gives his influence to further the interests of the church, will never withhold either time or money. By influence we may bring persons under the gospel, and so fill the house of prayer. By influence we may bring children to the Sunday school, and so find employment for all who are willing to teach. If every one helped his neighbour with his influence, we should have few empty pews, and no small classes. People may be induced to come and hear the word, if we only rightly use the means; and children will go to the school, if the members of the church try to induce them. Perhaps there are members in some of our

churches who never brought a person under the word, and some who never induced a child to go to the Sunday School. If so, is it any wonder that our chapels are thinly attended, or that some of our Sunday Schools are small? Let no one say, "I have no influence," for every one has; and not only so, but every one is constantly exerting it for good or evil, to help or to hinder God's cause. Reader, which are you doing? Which? The Lord knows, notes, and will remember which. Oh, that all our church members had *the heart* to use their influence for God and the advancement of his cause. Give yourself to *prayer* for the prosperity of Zion. Time, property, and influence will be inefficient without prayer; but to pray and not give our time, property, and influence, proves a want of sincerity. If those who only do the former are legal, those who only do the latter are hypocritical. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights; but it comes down in answer to prayer, and is received in the way of obedience, or when engaged in the work of the Lord. The man who can give no time to God, must not expect to receive the sanction of God. The man who withholds his property from God, must not expect to be enriched with the blessing of God. The man who will not use his influence for the good of others, must not expect the Holy Spirit to exert his influence in him. Such persons are selfish. They live for self, they labour for self, they lay

up for self, they only seek to gratify and aggrandize self, and the Lord cannot sanction selfishness. They profess to live for God's glory, but they make it evident that self is their object and end. Many of them would go miles for a job of work, who would not go as many yards to endeavour to bring a soul to Christ. They can rise early to be in time for market, but they cannot rise to plead with God to pour out his blessing on his church. They can make time to gratify the senses, but they have no time instrumentally to save souls. The fact is, the spread of the gospel, the salvation of sinners, and the glory of God, is not their grand object, for if it was, the generality of professors could never act as they do. Has prayer power with God? Sincere, hearty, believing prayer always has. Let us then *give ourselves unto prayer*, and determine to give the Lord no rest until he pour out his blessing on his churches.

Beloved, the cause of God generally is low; some few honoured individuals are striving to sustain it, to raise it, and they need your sympathy and assistance. The ancient heathen have set you an example. Shall it be lost upon you? "They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage." Did they act thus in the cause of Satan, and shall we be indifferent in the cause of God? Shall it be said that Heathenism furnishes stronger motives to activity and self consecration than Christianity? Is fear more

powerful than love? Are heathens wiser than the disciples of Jesus? Shall the heathen rise up in the judgment and witness against us, because they employed and united all their energies in support of gloomy superstitions, while we allowed ourselves to be indifferent, and neglected to co-operate to spread the truth and extend the kingdom of Christ? Brethren, you have heard of what the heathens give to support their idol worship,—you have heard the tortures they inflict upon themselves to please their cruel deities,—you have heard of the journeys they take, and the influence they exert, to obtain pardon and a prospect of rest beyond the grave,—allow me to ask you, affectionately and faithfully, Have you ever given, or suffered, or done any thing like this for the cause of Christ? If ye say it is not required, Have you shown any thing like the same zeal to do what is unquestionable required of you? Surely, the blinded Papist, and the degraded heathen, will rise up in judgment against many, and will condemn them; for they, misled by error, and influenced only by superstition, have done more to support and extend their miserable systems, than these have, with the Bible in their hands, and the Gospel sounding in their ears, to support and extend the cause of truth, holiness, and God. Brethren, awake! arise! and come forth to the help of the Lord. What enchants you? By the honour of Jesus, by the sighs of the saints, by the dejection of God's ministers, by the thousands that

are sinking to hell, by the hopeless groans of the lost, I beseech you to awake, arise, and "let every man help his neighbour," for there is work for all; and let every one say to his brother, "Be of good courage," for many are discouraged and fearful. If you have any faith in Christ,—if you have any zeal for God,—if you have any love for souls,—if you have any sympathy with God's minis.ers,—if you have any attachment to the truth,—if you have any wish that Jesus may be honoured, and that God may be glorified, in our world, and in our day, awake, arise, and "help every man his neighbour;" for it is by individual effort, and loving co-operation, that the church of Christ must rise. Let each one honestly and heartily say,—

My soul, and all its powers,
  Thine, wholly thine shall be
All, all my happy hours
  I consecrate to thee;
Whate'er I have, whate'er I am
Shall magnify my Maker's name.

Long as I live beneath,
  To thee O let me live,
To thee my every breath
  In thanks and blessings give;
Me to thine image now restore,
And I shall praise thee evermore.

A PORTION FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY.

"I MUST turn over a new leaf," said a man the other day, and it was quite time he did, for he was living in sin, neglecting his family, and despising his own soul. Now, I dare say many will read these lines who have often talked of turning over a new leaf, but have never done so. A temporary conviction flashed across the mind, and, without much thought, or any settled purpose, they gave utterance to the exclamation. Friend, listen to me for a few moments, and I will try to show you that it is necessary to turn over a new leaf, and that the present is the best time to do so. A new year begins to-day. The old year has told its tale before the throne of God. Every act performed, every word spoken, every thought conceived, every temper indulged, has been written as with a pen of iron on a table of brass. The record is permanent. Nothing can obliterate a letter, but the precious blood of Christ. The recording angel has just turned over a new leaf, and, with pen in hand, is ready to register the thoughts, plans, purposes, and practices of this year. You cannot look over the past with much pleasure, and had need begin afresh.—

First, If you have neglected your soul. Thousands have done so,—perhaps you have. They have attended to the body, even indulging its

lusts and evil propensities; but the soul, the never dying soul, has been neglected. What folly is this! It is like being careful of the frame, and allowing the picture to spoil; or paying attention to the clothes, and leaving the child to perish. The greatest loss in God's universe is the loss of a soul, and yet thousands of souls are daily lost by sinful neglect. If your soul is lost, it will be in consequence of neglect; wilful, deliberate, long-continued neglect. It may be saved, for Jesus is both able and willing to save it; but unless you apply to him. and seek salvation right earnestly, there is no probability that he will save you. Now if, up to the present time, you have neglected your soul; if you are still unpardoned, unsanctified, and unsaved, I am sure it is high time that you "turned over a new leaf."

Secondly, If you have lived without God. That is, without the knowledge of his nature and character,—without faith in his word,—without reconciliation to him by the cross of his Son,—without loving, worshiping, and obeying him. God is love, but if you do not love him, you do not know him. God is truth, but if you do not believe his word, you do not know him. God is the only object of adoration, but if you do not worship him in spirit and in truth, you do not know him. Now, if you do not know God, you are living without God; you have no faith in him, love to him, zeal for him, or fellowship with him. You are considered his enemy. An enemy

that refuses to be reconciled to him. An enemy who prefers his absence to his company, his creatures to himself. And if you are living without God; if you neither know his character, study his word, worship at his throne, or seek to do his will, I am sure it is high time for you to "turn over a new leaf."

Thirdly, If you are disregarding the rights of your neighbours. You neighbour has a right to your love, for God has commanded you to love your neighbour as yourself. You ought, therefore, to think kindly of every one, speak kindly to every one, and seek to do good to every one; for if you do not, how can you be said to keep God's law? And if you wilfully, allowedly, and habitually act contrary to God's law, are you not a criminal in his sight? and if a criminal, exposed to punishment? and if exposed to punishment at the hand of God, are you not in great danger of being sent to hell, and if in great danger of being sent to hell, is it not high time to "turn over a new leaf." "But my neighbour is no friend of mine." Perhaps not, but love makes friends, and keeps friends when made. "But my neighbour is above me, and I cannot *do* anything to show my love." Are you sure of that? Let love fill your thoughts, and it will look out at your eyes, and you will then soon see an opportunity to manifest that you love your neighbour. "But my neighbour is my enemy." If so, Jesus says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for

them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. v. 44, 45.) Did Jesus command what is right? Is his command binding on you? Do you live in the neglect, or violation of it? If so, it is high time for you to "turn over a new leaf."

Finally, If you have slighted the Saviour. Jesus came from heaven to earth, he laboured, suffered, and died, to save sinners. He cries, "Behold me! behold me!" He calls, "Come unto me." He promises, "He that believeth shall be saved." Have you fixed your mind intently upon what is written in the New Testament, or preached by God's ministers, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you come to him on his throne of grace, confessing your sins with sorrow, and praying for salvation with all the fervour of your soul? Do you exercise confidence in his word, and rely alone on his obedience and sacrifice, for your acceptance before God? In a word, have you taken him to be your Saviour, and placed yourself in his hands to be saved by him fully, freely, and for ever? If so, you are devoted to his service, and active in his cause; now, is this the case? If not, the Saviour is still slighted by you; and to live and die slighting the Saviour, is to make sure of eternal damnation. And I am sure if you are in this situation, it is high time for you to "turn over a new leaf."

Reader, what say you? With the new year

will you begin a new course? If so, shun the alehouse, go to the house of prayer, begin in earnest to seek the Lord, and be sure every time you go upon your knees, to entreat the Lord to create in you a new heart, and bless you with a right spirit. You will always be as your heart is. The great change, therefore, must commence there; this is the reason why God made the promise, which runs thus, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ez. xxxvi. 26.) This promise is given to show you that God is willing to give what you want, and to stir you up to ask for it at his hands. A new heart will embrace the Lord Jesus, and lead to a new course of life; and a new course of life flowing from faith in Jesus, will make a happy new year.

Captain of Israel's host and Guide,
Of all who seek that land above,
Beneath thy shadow we abide,
The cloud of thy protecting love,
Our strength thy grace, our rule thy word,
Our end, the glory of the Lord.

By thine unerring Spirit led,
We shall not in the desert stray,
The light of man's direction need,
Or miss our providential way,
As far from dangers as from fear,
While Love, Almighty Love, is near.

THE COMPLAINT.

"I AM CAST DOWN."—And why art thou cast down? "My heart is burdened with a sense of my short-comings. Every duty I perform is so imperfect. Every purpose I form is so soon frustrated. Every hope of seeing better days is so soon beclouded. My heart is so fearfully depraved. My life is so unlike the life of Jesus. My temper is so unholy. My prayers are so brief and heartless. My praises are so feeble and fitful. I do so little good. I live to so little purpose. My evidences are so dim. My prospects are so overcast. I am harrassed sometimes with the fear of death, and sometimes with the fear of dying. I cannot realize the glories of heaven, or desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better. I am dissatisfied with the world, and yet glued to it. I hate sin, and yet fall into it. I am a riddle, a mystery, a mass of inconsistency. Is it, then, any wonder that I am cast down?" No, if you look at yourself, and pore over the things you have named, it is no wonder that you are cast down. They are enough to cast any one down. But if you carry them to a throne of grace, if you there confess them before God, if you look to Jesus to save you from them, and, in spite of them, you will not long be cast down. I know it is difficult to do this. There is a natural proneness to pore

over such things. One feels at times a secret liking to indulge in gloomy thoughts. And Satan, I doubt not, slily encourages us to do so, because when so engaged we are unfitted for fellowship with God, to resist his temptations, to put forth any strenuous efforts in God's cause, or bring much honour to the dear Redeemer's name. We must look away from self, for if we do not, we shall become nervous, doubting and gloomy. We must run the race, not looking at our imperfections, short-comings, and failures, but looking unto Jesus. He knows what we are. He knew what we should be before he called us by his grace; yea, before he shed his blood for us. He loved us as sinners. He died for us as sinners. He called us as sinners. He saves us as sinners. He will have all the glory of saving us, and he will get great glory by doing so, because we are such great sinners; and do not, cannot, do any thing to repay him for his wondrous love. Salvation is by free grace, from first to last; believe this, and it will raise up thy drooping mind. Admit that anything is required of us as part or parcel of our salvation, and you sink lower than you are at present. The life-boat of free grace has put you on board the vessel of salvation, and that will convey you safely to the port of glory. Look not at your destitution, or feebleness, or incapacity, or imperfections, but trust in your Pilot, rely on your Captain, and expect his mercy and merit to land you safe at last. Imperfect you are, and imperfect you will be,

and your dying prayer may well be, "God be merciful unto me a sinner." Hope in God, his mercy is great unto the heavens, his grace is as free as the air, his love is as changeless as his nature, and his promise is as immutable as his love. Hope in God, for you shall yet praise him. He will save you for his own sake, and present you before assembled worlds as a monument of his mercy, and a trophy of his grace.

To lay the soul that loves him low,
  Becomes the Only-wise ;
To hide beneath a veil of woe
  The children of the skies.

Man, though a worm, would yet be great ;
  Though feeble, would seem strong :
Assume an independent state,
  By sacrilege and wrong.

Strange the reverse, which, once abas'd,
  The haughty creature proves !
He feels his soul a barren waste,
  Nor dares affirm, he loves.

Scorn'd by the thoughtless and the vain,
  To God he presses near ;
Superior to the world's disdain,
  And happy in its sneer.

Oh welcome, in his heart, he says,
  Humility and shame !
Farewell the wish for human praise,
  The music of a name !

THE RESOLVE.

"LORD, what is man!" Thus exclaimed the Psalmist in his day, and thus we often exclaim in ours. To see men, with the Bible in their hands, with the gospel sounding in their ears, with disease working in their system, with death cutting down their fellows all around them, with eternity opening before them, with the stamp of immortality upon their souls,—to see men, under such circumstances, rejecting the gospel, slighting the Saviour, and urging on their way to eternity in the dark, is enough to make any thoughtful person exclaim, "What is man!" Let us endeavour to put the sinner's conduct into words, and see how many are prepared to own it as their own, or deliberately subscribe their names to it. Every sinner, who lives in impenitence and unbelief, within reach of the gospel, says,—

"I am resolved to persevere in sin, and follow the maxims and customs of those around me, though it cost me the loss of my soul, and expose me to everlasting damnation. I am resolved to reject the Son of God,—I will not receive him as God's gift, embrace him as my Saviour, or have him to reign over me. I am resolved that I will not accept the pardon which God presents to me in the gospel, though it cost the Son of God his life to procure it, and I know I must eternally

perish without it. I am determined not to submit to the righteousness of God, so that if I cannot be saved in any other way, I consent to be lost for ever. I have made up my mind, that nothing short of Omnipotence shall ever bring me to consent to receive a free salvation, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; God may speak to me in his word, and ministers may preach to me, but unless Almighty power change my heart, I will not have it. I am resolved to slight God's message, to resist his Holy Spirit, to strive against the influence of his love, to dare his justice, to defy his power, to refuse his mercy, to brave his threatened wrath, and to harden myself against all his invitations, expostulations, exhortations, and promises. I am resolved that I will not bow to his authority, yield to his entreaties, believe on his Son, repent of my sins, love his name, or obey his precepts. I am determined that there shall never be joy in heaven among the angels of God, on account of my conversion. I never will desert the ranks of Satan, give up my sinful practices, crave mercy at God's hands, or take up a cross and follow Christ. I am resolved to keep on in my old course, to persevere in my present path, to associate with my carnal companions, and if it secures my eternal damnation, let it do so. I will not receive salvation on God's terms, I will not stoop to be saved by grace alone, I will not take the yoke of Christ upon me, and engage to be his subject and servant, though heaven and all the glories of eternity should be secured by

it. If I cannot escape the wrath of God, but by faith, repentance, and holiness, why, I must go to hell, for I am resolved not to yield to any such terms. It is of no use for the preacher to spend his breath upon me, my mind is made up, I will be my own master, I will take my own course, and no one has any right to interfere with me, for I shall injure no one but myself. I have no objection to go to church, or chapel, and listen to a good preacher, or to attend to some of the forms of religion, but to give my heart to God, to be crucified to the present world, and to make God's glory the end of life, will never do for me, therefore I must take the consequences. If this is required of those who would be religious, you may leave off urging me, for I will not yield; you may give over all attempts to convert me, for my mind is made up; I have heard hundreds of sermons, I have read the Bible myself, I have listened to many prayers, but I have hardened myself against the whole, and I am not going to yield now. Tell me no more of a Saviour's love, tell me no more of the pleasures of religion, tell me no more of the terrors of death, tell me no more of the terrible judgment seat, tell me no more of the joys of heaven, tell me no more of the agonies of hell, if thereby you wish to induce me to yield myself unto God, and seek the immediate salvation of my soul, for my mind is made up, and my daily conduct is enough to convince you of it, if any thing would. I am resolved not to yield, let the consequences be what they may;

I will go on as I have done, I will not be Christ's servant, I will not be God's son, but I will obey Satan, I will follow the course of this world, I will serve my lusts and pleasures; and in proof thereof, witness my hand, this —— day of ——, in the year of our Lord, ——." * * * *

Who will now first sign his name? Who will solemnly put his seal to this? Rather, who will not start back with a shudder, and exclaim, "God forbid!" But why do so? Do not actions speak louder than words? Is not the daily practice stronger proof than just putting the name to a statement once? If you do not say the above in words, yet if you do so in your actions, where is the difference? Does not God read the language of your life? If you say it practically, why not boldly take the pen and openly append your name? The majority of persons around us are living in enmity against God, they are not subject to his law, neither will they embrace his gospel, then why not sign the name? But suppose such a statement as the above was printed that it was signed by your own hand, and a copy of it was left at every house in the city, town, or village where you live, would you not feel ashamed to walk the streets? But why so? Ten thousand angels, every true believer, and God himself, read it every day in your conduct. As the ministering angels pass by you, they recognize and notice you, as one who refuses to be saved by grace, but prefers to perish in your sins. Every messenger of Satan who observes you, or is employed

to blind your mind and tempt you to sin, gazes upon you as one who refuses to receive a pardon from the hand of God, but prefers to lie under condemnation, exposed to all the tremendous horrors of the second death. Every right-minded and thoughtful Christian grieves over you and prays for you, that you may not be allowed to perish in your own deceivings. And when the judgment shall be set, and the books shall be opened, your criminality and folly shall be published before assembled worlds. Oh, sinner, sinner! think, think what can be more preposterous than your conduct? What folly can be equal to yours? Jesus, the glorious Son of God, says, "I would receive you, if you come; I would pardon you, if you believe; I would give you the Holy Spirit, if you ask me; I would be a Saviour unto you, if you receive me; *but you will not.* You will not come unto me that you might live. I would have gathered you under my wings, but YOU WOULD NOT. "Israel would none of me, so I gave them up" (Ps. lxxxi. 11, 12).

Well, reader, will *you* sign the above? Why not? Is it true of you, or is it not? If you will not sign that, will you honestly, seriously, and solemnly, as before God, sign another? It is this,—

"I resolve, by God's mercy, and in God's strength, to break off all my old sinful habits, to forsake my carnal companions, and to make the salvation of my soul my one grand object. I am resolved to be saved, if the Lord Jesus will save

me. I am resolved to be pardoned, if God will pardon me. I am determined to obtain mercy, if God will give it me. I will be a thorough, decided, devoted Christian, if God, in answer to prayer, will make me one; and in proof thereof, witness my hand, this —— day of ——, in the year of our Lord ——." * * * * *

My dear friend, you may blot out all those "*ifs*," for Jesus *will* save you, and rejoice to do it, if you are willing to be saved by him. God *will* pardon you, and pardon you abundantly, if you seek it in the name of his beloved Son. He *will* show you mercy, and make you what you ask, if you ask in faith and plead with importunity at his throne. There is no difficulty about salvation on God's part, all the difficulty is on ours. His justice is fully satisfied, on behalf of all who believe in Jesus. His mercy is free, for all who apply for it in faith. His Spirit, as the Sanctifier, Comforter, and Teacher, is promised to all who ask it at his hands. He really delights in mercy. He waits day after day that he may be gracious. He will in no wise reject a coming sinner, or refuse to listen to a praying soul. Be you, then, like the happy countryman, who was full of faith and rejoicing in hope, and, being asked how it was that he felt so confident and happy, replied, "The Lord Jesus says, Come unto me, and I will give you rest; and I say, Lord, I do come, and that's a bargain." The Saviour and the sinner were agreed. Jesus promises rest to the coming soul, the man accepted

of the terms, he believed the promise, he came to Jesus, and he enjoyed rest. He that believeth on Jesus hath everlasting life, and he that exercises confidence in the promise of Jesus, enjoys the assurance of it. Believing on Jesus is just receiving his word, accepting his invitation, giving credit to his promise, and placing our entire dependance on him for access to God, acceptance with God, and justification before God. It is taking Jesus to be our Sacrifice, Substitute, and Saviour, and exercising entire confidence in him. So doing, if there be virtue in his blood, if there be merit in his obedience unto death, if there be power in his intercession, if there be truth in his word, we *must* be saved. And if we really thus exercise faith in Christ, and expect to be saved by Christ, we shall obey his precepts out of love, and serve him from gratitude of heart. Thus the faith that receives salvation as a free gift, becomes the root of every good work, and the stronger our faith, the more perfect will our obedience be. True faith always produces correct conduct, and leads the exemplary Christian to give all the glory to God.

Blessed be the power who gave us,
Freely give his Son to save us;
  Blest the Son who freely came;
Honour, blessing, adoration,
Ever from the whole creation,
  Be to God and to the Lamb.

THE SICK MAN'S PRAYER.

Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins. PSALM XXV. 18.

WE are all liable to sickness, and sometimes the Christian seems to have the greatest share. Some of the Lord's people are seldom if ever well. They are never quite free from pain and suffering. Their heavenly Father sees that such a furnace is needful for them; he therefore prepares it, puts them into it, and continues them there as long as he sees it necessary. Diseases do not fly at random. They are not left to chance. They are all billetted, and divinely directed. If sickness seize Hezekiah, God sends it. If Lazarus is sick unto death, it is for the glory of God. He refines his people, displays his grace, and fulfills his precious promises in the furnace. Sickness teaches us our mortality, our dependance on God, and our need of divine consolations, in a way which nothing else will. It weans us from the world, humbles our pride, and brings us near to our heavenly Father's throne. It leads us to look after our evidences, to search and try our ways, and to seek a renewed sense of our Saviour's pardoning love.

The Psalmist was afflicted, he suffered much, he looked up and he sighed, "*Look upon my affliction.*" He wished to realize that the Lord

was observing him, that he was sympathising with him, that he was attentive to him. He knew that the Lord's look would soothe his spirit, cheer his heart, and relieve his pain. The Lord's loving look does wonders in the experience of his people. But sometimes they lie for days and he seems to stand aloof, they cry but he does not appear to regard them, they groan but his ear is as it were closed to them. To be sick and not have the Lord's presence, is a sad, a heavy trial. We can bear any thing if we feel him to be present with us, but if he is absent, the least thing is sufficient to irritate and make us sad. Let every sick believer therefore, adopt the Psalmists course, let him use this brief but comprehensive prayer." "Look upon me in my affliction." Look, and receive my graces; that my faith may be lively, my love fervent, my hope vigorous, my humility deep, my penitence abiding, and my zeal for thy glory active. Look, and brighten my evidences; that I may have no doubt of my sonship, no question about my saintship, but trace the work of thy Holy Spirit in my heart, and the fruits of that work in my life. Look, and clear my prospects; that I may have a glimpse of the good land, a distant view of the holy city, a satisfying anticipation of the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Look, and cause my foes to flee; they haunt, they harrass, they appear ready to devour me; but one look from thee will cause them to depart from me, and leave me to enjoy my rest. Look, and give me sweet resignation

to thy will; that I may not wish for ease, relief, or health, except it will honour thee, increase my usefulness, or make my sanctification more complete.

"Look upon my pain," it is severe, protracted, and exhausting. My flesh cries out. My patience is tried. My strength fails. My nights are wearisome, and my days long. I look at those who enjoy ease, and am tempted to envy them. I think of the healthy, and am at times ready to repine. I fear my patience will fail. I fear lest I should dishonour thee by fretting, complaining, or being too anxious for relief. "Look upon my pain," for medicine affords little relief, the skill of the physician fails, and human sympathy can do little for me. "Look upon my pain," and remember thy promise, is it not written, "The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." O look and strengthen me. Look and make my bed. Be my kind, gentle, and tender nurse; for I put my trust in thee. "Look upon my pain," and remember thy paternal relationship, for thou hast said, "Like as a father pitieth his children; so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are but dust." O my father pity me! Thou knowest what a poor, feeble, afflicted frame mine is. Look upon thy poor child, soothe my sorrows, dry my tears, and grant me a little relief. I do fear thee, I would not offend thee. I would not grieve thy

loving heart. Help me to lie passive in thy hand. Help me to accept the correction of mine iniquities. Help me to bow in meek submission and kiss thy chastening rod. "Look upon my pain," and remember what Jesus suffered for me. Remember how he languished in Gethsemane, how he was tortured on Calvary, and for his sake afford me aid. Let his sufferings render mine salutary. Let me sympathize with him and be silent.

"Forgive all my sins." Affliction leads us to reflection, and reflection brings our sins to remembrance: and it is sometimes very painful on the bed of affliction, to review the past. Things appear very different then to what they do when in health and strength. When left alone with God, we look upon the past as in his sight; we see cause for sorrow, shame, and grief, where we little expected to find it. Times of suffering are very often stripping times. Like the trees in winter, we lose our foliage then. Things appear naked and open, and we see sin in our holiest services, staining our holiest hours. How necessary the atonement appears now. How precious the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. What could we do without the sacrifice of Jesus, or how could we stand before God without his glorious righteousness? Now we need not only the promise, but the power of the Holy Spirit applying it. Now we want the inward assurance that our iniquities are forgiven that our sins are covered. Nothing will give us solid peace now,

but the well-founded persuasion, that "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Now we say with feeling, with fervour, with importunity, "*Forgive all my sins.*" We want to stand fully pardoned—perfectly justified—lovingly accepted before God. To be quite sure, that "God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us." Guilt on the conscience is a fearful thing on the bed of sickness. Doubts of our acceptance with God, add tenfold to our bodily pains. We ought therefore daily to settle our accounts with God. To confess sin over the sacrifice of Jesus, and obtain a just and clear resolution. For "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Beloved, if in health, beware of carrying the guilt of the present into the future. It will be a tormenting companion on a sick bed. If sick, look up to thy gracious God, look to him through Jesus, his Son, and your sacrifice, and beseech him to look upon your affliction and your pain, and forgive all your sins. Remember, he is good, ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon him. The merit of your Saviour's blood is infinite, the efficacy of it is eternal; it has availed for thousands, it will avail for you; it may have availed for you in time past, it will avail for you *now*. Be much in prayer now, and you will have occasion to be much in praise by and bye. Sow in tears now, and you will reap in joy ere long. The mercy of God is everlast-

ing, and his precious, precious promises can never fail. Go at his call and reason with him, and you will find that your sins which are as scarlet shall be white as snow, and your crimes which are as crimson shall be white as wool. He is faithful to his word, gracious in his nature, and will glorify himself in your everlasting salvation. The door of hope is open, the path of peace is before you, enter and all shall be well.

Will the pardoning God despise
A poor mourner's sacrifice,
One who brings his all to thee,
All his sin and misery?

Saviour, see my troubled breast,
Heaving, panting after rest,
Jesus, mark my hollow eye,
Never clos'd and never dry.

Listen to my plaintive moans,
Deep uninterrupted groans,
Keep not silence at my tears,
Quiet all my griefs and fears.

Good physician, show thine art,
Bind thou up my broken heart;
Aches it not for thee, my God,
Pants to feel the healing blood?

Jesus, answer all thy name,
Save me from my fear and shame,
Sunk in desperate misery,
Sinner's Friend, remember me.

A MESSAGE FROM GOD.

READER,

THE eye of God is upon you, he observes the state of your heart, he notices every thought, and is either pleased or displeased with every action. He has never had his eye off you for one moment at any period of your life, nor has one thought, word, or action, escaped his notice. All you have purposed, planned, or wrought, is now before him; and his eye rests upon it, as though it was the only thing that claimed his attention. He has often been grieved with your conduct. Your thoughtlessness, your worldly-mindedness, and your many sins of thought, word, and deed, have offended his glorious majesty. He might justly cut you off, and doom you to suffer his wrath for ever. But he spares you. He bears with you. He sends to you. You have, perhaps, lived without prayer. You have not been in the habit of retiring to pour out your heart before God. You have sinned, but have never confessed your sins with sorrow. You have received many mercies, but have never acknowledged those mercies with gratitude. You have lived as if you were not an accountable creature, as if God took little or no interest in you, or your conduct. Your time has been squandered. Your soul has been neglected. Eternity has not occupied your mind as it should. You have lived in God's

world, without seeking to please him. You have lived under God's law, without regarding its precepts or threatenings. You have possessed God's book, but it has not been carefully read, or cordially believed. You are within a step of death, and yet you have made no preparation for eternity. Is this wise? Is this consistent? Can such conduct be justified? Can you be safe? Ought you to be happy or cheerful? My dear friend, think of these things. Think seriously. Do not put them from you, for they are of everlasting moment. Perhaps this may be the last opportunity you may have of reviewing your life, calling upon God, and fleeing for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ. Trifle not, I pray you, but attentively consider what you read.

Why will you in the crooked ways
Of sin and folly go?
In pain you travel all your days
To reap immortal woe!

God has pitied you. He has borne with you. There is at this moment pity in his heart toward you. He sends this little book to you. He is loath to punish sin. He has no pleasure in executing the sentence of his law upon you. He would rather that you should think, repent, believe in Jesus, and live. He is waiting to show you mercy. He is at this moment noticing how you treat his truth. He is observing the effect which this little messenger will have upon your mind. Think of the great and glorious Jehovah

pitying you. You, who have so deeply grieved him. You, who have so often forgotten him. You, who have committed so many sins against him. But the Lord is good, *ready to forgive,* and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon him. "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, *slow to anger,* and of great mercy." He is always backward to punish, but he is ready to forgive, because he delighteth in mercy. He is ready to pardon *you.* He is willing to forgive his greatest enemy, and show mercy to the foulest transgressor. Therefore he says in his word, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and *he will have mercy upon him,* and to our God, for he will *abundantly pardon.*"

His love exceeds your highest thoughts;
He pardons like a God;
He will forgive your numerous faults,
Through a Redeemer's blood.

That he might show his mercy, display his pity, and honourably save sinners, he sent his only begotten Son into the world. He who was God, became man. As man, he fulfilled the law which we had broken; he suffered the penalty which we had incurred. He did *all,* and he suffered *all* which was necessary, in order to the salvation of the chief of sinners. And through his substitution, obedience, and sacrifice, God now fully pardons, and perfectly justifies every

one that believes on his name. Christ is the Lamb, which God provided; the sacrifice, which God accepted; the way, which God opened; and through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall obtain, remission of sins. There is now nothing whatever in the way, of the sinner's access to God, and restoration to the favour of God. Any sinner can now obtain pardon, enjoy peace, and acquire a title to everlasting life. The perfect work of Christ, is all that is necessary to the sinner's acceptance before a holy God, and "by him all that believe are justified from all things." His sins may be more numerous than the stars, or the sands on the sea shore: they may be red like scarlet, or even glow like crimson, but the moment he credits God's word, and exercises confidence in the Lord Jesus, that moment every sin is forgiven, and he stands before God as really justified, as if he had never been guilty of one transgression. Is not this good news? Is not this a message worthy of God?

What could the Redeemer do,
More than he hath done for you?
To procure your peace with God,
Could he more than shed his blood?

In the gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ, with all the blessings and benefits flowing from his sacrifice and death, is presented to sinners. Whosoever needs Christ, may receive Christ: and whosoever receives him, to them he gives liberty and power to become the sons of God, even to them

that believe on his name. He is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. He is the sacrifice, through which God pardons sin; the mercy-seat, where God accepts sinners; and the means by which God is reconciled to sinners. If therefore, we would have our sins pardoned, if we would have God pleased with us, if we would be acquitted of all charges before his throne: we must plead Jesus as the sacrifice for our sins, and we must place our entire confidence in Jesus as an able and sufficient Saviour.

Lo the incarnate God ascended,
Pleads the merits of his blood:
Venture on him, venture wholly,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good.

Reader, God presents his beloved Son to you, he says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." He is able to save to the uttermost." You must either receive him, or reject him. If you receive him, God is at peace with you: he will blot out your sins as a cloud, and your iniquities as a thick cloud; he will make an everlasting covenant with you, and give you the sure mercies of David. But if you reject him, you judge yourself unworthy of everlasting life, and seal your own condemnation. How can you escape, if you neglect this great salvation? But *will* you reject it? *Can* you reject it? Shall God pity you, shall he present

his beloved Son to you, shall he swear that he has no pleasure in your death, and will you by your cold neglect, careless indifference, or insane rejection of Christ, render it necessary to doom you to everlasting woe? Have you no pity for your own soul? Have you no fear of endless torments? Have you no desire for eternal happiness? Will you really rush blindfolded into blackness, darkness, and despair?

> You for higher ends were born,
> You may now to God return,
> Dwell with him above the sky:
> Why will you for ever die?

God invites you to his throne. He invites you at this moment. He says, "Come and let us reason together." He is willing to hear what you can say. He is ready to listen to your confessions and receive your petitions. He is prepared to pardon you, if you frankly confess your sins, and rely on the finished work of his beloved Son. You have nothing to do but confess, plead the blood of Jesus, believe God's precious word, and be happy. Your path is plain. Only believe, for "he that believeth shall be saved." Only trust in Jesus, for "he that believeth shall be safe." Only confess and forsake your sins, for "he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy." God will receive every coming sinner. He will adopt every one whom he receives into his family. He will give unto every one whom he adopts, the Spirit of his Son.

Come then, to God, by Jesus Christ, cast your self at his feet, prove his faithfulness to his word, obtain the pardon of all your sins, enjoy the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and be acknowledged a child of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. There is nothing between you and all those blessing but unbelief; nothing can prevent you from enjoying them, but rejecting the counsel of God against yourself. The way of life is open. The path that leads to God is plain. "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Ask then, and *you* shall receive; seek, and *you* shall find; knock at the door of mercy, and you shall be admitted.

No longer now delay,
Nor vain excuses frame:
He bids you come TO-DAY,
Though poor, and blind, and lame:
All things are ready, sinner, come,
For every trembling soul there's room.

This then is the message, "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." We could not obtain life ourselves, by any thing we could do or suffer, therefore God sent his Son into the world, that we might obtain life through him. There is life in Christ. We may obtain life from Christ. If we receive Christ, we have eternal life.—That is if we see that

Jesus has made an atonement for sin; if we accept his invitation, and rely on that atonement; if thus relying on Jesus, we approach God as seated upon a throne of grace, all our sins are forgiven us for his sake; his obedience is placed to our account, and we have a title to eternal blessedness. Justice is satisfied on our behalf. The law is fulfilled and honoured by Jesus in our stead. God is at peace with us, and well pleased with us. We are identified with Christ, and to us there is no condemnation. God looks upon us as his children, and treats us as such: only requiring that we should love him, obey him, walk in fellowship with him, endeavour to bring others to him, and then go, to be for ever with him. We are now reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and God will not impute our trespasses unto us. We are at peace with God. We are no longer under the law which condemns us: but under grace, which justifies us. God is our Father, Jesus is our constant Intercessor, the Holy Spirit is our Comforter, and heaven will be our final home. All things on earth shall work together for our good, and all things in heaven shall be conferred on us by and bye.

O believe the record true,
God to you his Son has given;
Ye may now be happy too,
Find on earth the life of heaven:
Live the life of heaven above,
All the life of glorious love.

But *have* you received the message? Have

you believed it? Have you acted upon it? Do you enjoy peace with God as the result? *Will* you receive it? God now puts this question to you. He asks "Will you receive the message which I have in mercy sent you?" Do not lay it by and forget it. Do not say, "Go thy way for this time, until I have a more convenient season." Do not let the cares of the world, or "the deceitfulness of riches choke the word." Do not let Satan persuade you to trifle with truth, stifle conviction, and harden your heart against God. It may be the last time he will speak to you. It may be the last message he will send to you. If you treat this with contempt, he may say "Let him alone," or "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground." This message will not leave you as it found you. Your responsibility will be increased. Your heart will either be softened or hardened. Your condemnation will either be removed or increased. God's eye is now watching you as you draw towards the close of it, he is observing what you will do with it. I want to fix this thought on your mind, therefore I repeat it. It is God's message, not man's, it is intended for your good, and it will do you good, if you mix faith with it. That is, if you believe it, and act upon it.

Bow to the sceptre of his word,
Renouncing every sin;
Submit to him, your sov'reign Lord,
And learn his will divine.

However you treat God's word, you must account for it. "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Every thing that we have felt, thought, said, or done, will be present before the eye of the Omniscient Judge. He will judge us righteously, "according to the deeds done in the body." If we are then found impenitent, if we stand charged with rejecting the gospel of the grace of God, we shall be condemned to eternal punishment. But if we appear as believers in the Son of God, if we possess his perfect righteousness, we shall be invited to inherit the kingdom prepared before the foundation of the world. These are solemn things. They are realities. They ought not to be trifled with for one moment. Reader, will you be saved? or, will you perish? If you were sent into eternity to-day, by some sudden, unexpected stroke, what would be the consequence to you? Are you prepared? if not, when will you be? or, why are you not? There is a Saviour provided. You need that Saviour. You have heard of him. He is now presented to you. You must be saved by him, or be lost ever. There is no other way to escape the wrath to come, or secure the joys of heaven, but by faith in Christ. There is no faith in Christ, if the soul can live without prayer, if we can indulge in any known sin, if we do not feel Jesus to be precious to us. Seriously consider this, and look at once to Jesus for life and peace.

Peace is proclaimed! O, bless the sound
Of pardon bought with blood divine:
God has himself the ransom found,
Which could atone for sins like thine.

O, my friend, what is your state before God at this moment? Are you in Christ? Have you ever wept over sin? Have you ever sought the Saviour, as one searches for hidden treasure? Have you obtained peace with God, by receiving the atonement? Are you living in fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ? Have you received the Holy Ghost? Has he convinced you of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come? Has he led you to Jesus as a lost sinner, to trust in his blood, and seek salvation in his name? These are solemn questions. They ought not to be lightly passed over, for the time is short, eternity with all its awful realities will soon dawn upon us, and then who will be able to stand? No one, but the man who has renounced self, embraced the Saviour, forsaken sin, walked with God, and been sanctified by the Holy Spirit. O, if you should be weighed in the balance, and be found wanting! If, when you expected to be admitted to heaven, you should be sentenced to hell! This may be the case. If you live without self-examination it will. Thousands are deceiving themselves, and the Saviour informs us that many who expected to be received into heaven, will be rejected by him at last. This should make us thoughtful. It should stir us up to make sure work for eternity.

Now, the way of salvation is plain before us; the Holy Spirit is promised to every one that asks for him; and whosoever will, may come to God by Jesus Christ, and obtain deliverance from the wrath to come. But the door of mercy will soon be shut. The way of life will soon be closed. The invitations of the gospel will soon be withdrawn. Then there will be no hope. Then, all will be black despair. Then, all who trifle with God's word, reject God's message, or neglect to embrace God's great salvation, will lie down in sorrow. Reader, if this should be your case! It may. But if it is, the fault will be entirely your own. Your destruction will be altogether of yourself. You will not be able justly to blame any one but yourself. You had the Bible, you ought to have searched it. You heard the gospel, you ought to have embraced it. You were directed to Jesus, you ought to have exercised confidence in him. You were warned, you ought to have forsaken sin. You were invited, you ought to have drawn near to God. You were exhorted, you ought to have fled for refuge to the hope set before you in the gospel. But this is not the case yet. It need not be. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time: behold *now* is the day of salvation." You may be saved *to-day*, but you may be lost *to-morrow*. Jesus invites you *now*, but he may *soon* shut to the door: and the door once shut, is shut for ever. Flee then, flee from the wrath to come. Haste, haste to the Saviour's arms, and eternal live is yours.

ONE HOUR AFTER DEATH.

THE news of the unexpected death of a dear friend has suggested this thought. He is gone. He is in another world. He knows more about its nature, employments, and enjoyments than we can do. I must die soon. It may be very soon. Let me, then, think of death, and of the hour after death. If I die among friends, my eyes will then be closed, my body will be laid out, the white sheet will cover it, and in the quiet chamber it will be left. It is now unconscious, inanimate, a mere mass of matter. It must soon be conveyed to the grave, and there be hidden from the sight of man, or it will become offensive. Yes, the nearest relative, the one that loved me most, will say, "Bury my dead out of my sight." But the soul, the immortal part, the man, what has become of him? One hour after death,

Where shall I be? Ah, where! That will entirely depend upon what I am now, what death finds me. Every spirit goes to its own home. Like Judas, each one will go to his own place. Where shall I be? I may be in hell, lifting up my eyes in torments, looking round for some one or something to comfort me. Dreadful supposition! But it is not impossible. If I die under the guilt of sin,—if I die without having experienced a new birth,—it is certain. For except a

man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Awful thought, to be in hell one hour after death! Then no prayers will avail, no sufferings will excite pity, nor cries or tears will be regarded. Hope will be for ever shut out. Agony and despair must be endured perpetually. But if I die a believer in Jesus,—if cleansed in his blood,—if clothed in his righteousness,—if sanctified by his Spirit,—if united to his person, —where shall I be one hour after death? Oh, glorious thought, I shall be with him! Yes, I shall hear his sweet voice, see his lovely face, and stand before his glorious throne. I shall be in heaven,—the home of the saints,—the house of the living God.—the region of holiness, happiness, and love. I shall know what heaven is. I shall realize what perfect holiness means. I shall have lost every wish, and be in possession of all I could desire. Oh, to be with Jesus,—to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God,—to enjoy the company of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and holy ministers forever! What a noble place I shall be in! What glorious company I shall have! What estatic joys I shall taste! Oh, what a change I shall experience! One hour after death,

What shall I be? I shall be a pure and holy spirit, no longer, fettered, imprisoned, hindered, and pained by a body of flesh, or a body of sin and death. I shall be a Son of God, realizing my relationship, at home with my Father, surrounded with myriads of my brothers and sisters,

all perfectly holy, and perfectly happy. I shall be a saint, fully sanctified, and made meet for my Master's use; to doubt my election, or question my calling, or suspect my sincerity, will be impossible. I shall be holy as my Father is holy. I shall be perfect, as my Saviour is perfect. I shall be without fault before the throne of God. Oh, wondrous mystery, that one like me, so full of faults, so deeply depraved, so dreadfully polluted, should be pronounced faultless by the Judge of all! But if I should die out of Christ, without repentance, without holiness, what shall I be? Ah, what! A soul lost! A ruined sinner! Condemned to suffer God's just wrath, the bitter reflections of my own mind, the fearful lashings of my own conscience, for ever. Self-condemned,—condemned by all around me,—a spectacle of misery,—a monument of God's justice,—a terrified witness to God's holiness and truth. Ah, then I shall know the meaning of those terrible words, "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, fire, brimstone, and a horrible tempest." Then I shall experience what is meant by being "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," and shall feel all the unknown horrors of the "second death." What a fearful thing must *sin*, *my sin*, be, to demand such tremendous punishment at the hands of a just God,—to call for such a terrible infliction from a God who is emphatically love! Oh, the thought, that I should be a lost soul, a companion of devils and damned immortals! One hour after death,

How shall I be employed? How am I employed now? Is Jesus my Master, his service my delight, and his glory my end? If I now live for God, walk with God, and work in order to please God, then I may expect to be employed in praising his name, admiring his love, and adoring his glorious perfections. My employment will be my pleasure, and my service my joy. I shall stand among the ransomed, walk with Jesus in white, and praise his name on my golden harp for ever. No wandering thoughts, no roving imagination, no tempting devil, no corrupt heart, no unhallowed associations, will interrupt, disturb, or hinder me in my services there. No, all will be pure as the light, peaceful as the bosom of God, and happy as the presence of God and the Lamb can make it. But if Satan is my master, if his service suits my taste, and if self-gratification is my end, then my employment will be dismal, dreadful, unspeakably painful. What can I do but inflict torment on myself, and increase the torment of others,—but hate myself, and every one that suffers with me? The mind will be always active; but every exercise of the mind will but add to the weight of woe already experienced. Every thought of God, of his justice or his mercy, will be like another bitter drop in the cup of suffering. Every thought of the past will only aggravate the agonies of the present. But to look forward will be worst of all. What is before? Eternity. Duration without termination. Existence without change for the

better. A fearful "*for ever.*" The knell of hope is sounded. The endless reign of despair has commenced. Time is ended. All through the future God's judgments must be endured, his threatenings will be fulfilling. How dreadful my employment may be! One hour after death, *What will be my feelings?* If heaven is gained,—if endless happiness is secured,—if the approbation of God is realized,—if the assurance of unchangeable blessedness is enjoyed,—what will be my feelings? What joy, what gratitude, what peace, what holy exultation! No tongue can speak, no pen can write, no language can describe, the feelings of the happy spirit. The sight of Jesus, the songs of saints, the unveiled glories of God, what, oh, what feelings will these produce! The absence of pain, freedom from sin, superiority to Satan, the full realization of all our highest and holiest desires, what feelings will these produce! But we must die to know what our feelings of gratitude, joy, and love will be—one hour after death. But if heaven is lost, if hell is my doom, if everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord is my portion, what, oh, what will my feelings be! What bitter remorse! What agonizing reflections! What terrible apprehensions! What hopeless despair! What awful sufferings! But we must die, die under the curse of God, die rejecting the gospel, die unpardoned, in order to know what will be the feelings of a lost soul—one hour after death. How many of my readers will die in this state?

How many will *risk* the possibility of dying so, by living in sin, by neglecting their souls, by presuming on God's mercy, or by hardening themselves in sin? How different things will appear—one hour after death. How differently we shall think of money, pleasure, the indulgence of the appetite, all that we now call great, grand, and desirable—one hour after death. Let us endeavour to think now, as it is probable we shall think then. Let us place ourselves in heaven, and try to think there. Let us place ourselves in hell, and try to think there. Let us instantly, heartily, importunately, seek a title to heaven, and a meetness for it, nor rest until we possess them.

O for that tenderness of heart
  Which bows before the Lord,
Acknowledges how just thou art,
  And trembles at thy word!
O for those humble contrite tears
  Which from repentance flow,
That consciousness of guilt, which fears
  The long suspended blow!

Saviour, to me in pity give
  The sensible distress,
The pledge thou wilt at last receive,
  And bid me die in peace!
Wilt from the dreadful day remove
  Before the evil come,
My spirit hide with saints above,
  My body in the tomb.

HIDDEN SIN.

His sin is hid. HOSEA xiii. 12.

THE only thing some fear is exposure. They would not be exhibited in their true colours before their fellow-men for the world. They wish to live and act in the dark. The eye of God they fear not, the eye of men they dread. In public they are one thing, in private just the opposite. No one knows them but those who live with them. There is a vast amount of hypocrisy in the world. Multitudes wear a mask. They are not what they seem to be. This is sad. The consequences will be fearful by and bye. Open sinners offend God and men, secret sinners offend God only. But he is the principal party. Better offend the whole world than offend God. But who are these secret sinners?

There is *the sly drunkard.* The man who only gets intoxicated at home, or who manages to drink much, and yet never reel in the street. He robs his family. He introduces disease into his body. He squanders his property. He becomes selfish. He neglects his duties,—moral, entirely,—domestic, in part. Few, if any suspect him, until at length his bloated countenance begins to tell tales. "*His sin is hid.*"—There is *the crafty deceiver.* He practices deception upon the ignorant and unwary. He talks like

an honest man, but he acts like a rogue. Believe his plausible pretensions, and he will be sure to pick your pocket. His words are smooth; his tongue is oily; his professons are fair; his offers appear to be generous, but his aim is to make you his dupe. Few detect him until they are caught in his net. "*His sin is hid.*"—There are *the self-righteous*. They appear very devout. They perform many duties. Their views of truth are, perhaps, tolerably sound. Their external deportment is correct. They are sure they are safe; they wish every one to think that they are right. They talk of Christ, but they do not rest alone on his finished work. They speak of the Holy Spirit, but they have never felt his regenerating and renewing operations. They boast of free grace, but in heart they think much more of their own performances. They fancy God must love them, because they love themselves. They conclude they must be saved, because if they have not made God their debtor, they have done that on account of which he cannot reject them. Self-love is the root of their profession. Self-esteem is the ground of their confidence. They work *for* life, not *from* life. They are under the legal covenant, not the evangelical. They have never been stripped before God's throne. The law has never come home, in its convincing and condemning power, to their consciences. They have never had their mouths stopped, or been brought in guilty before God. Therefore they prefer their own sandy foundation, to the Rock

of Ages: and they stumble at the stumbling-stone, even Christ, who is the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of his people. "*Their sin is hid.*" There are the *self-deceivers*. These fancy that they are rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. They have elected themselves to everlasting life, and conclude, without any just grounds, that God has done so too. Because they have never thoroughly examined their hearts in the light of God's law, or carefully compared what they call their experience, with the evidences of a new birth, they conclude that they are Christians, though in their natural condition. They take home all the promises, and put from them all the threatenings. They make use of marks for others, but see not the need of doing so for themselves. They take it for granted that they are right, but are labouring under a most fearful deception. They are in the state which Solomon refers to when he said, "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Prov. xxx. 12). "These are they who make themselves rich, yet have nothing" (Prov. xiii. 7). The blood of Christ is not at the root of their profession; the life of God is not in their souls; the power of the Holy Spirit has never been experienced in their hearts; they deceive themselves, and they deceive others. "*Their sin is hid.*"

Reader, are you either of these characters? Are you sure that you are not? Search and look.

Self-examination never injures a real Christian. The power of sin is great; and one of the most fearful things in sin is its power of self-conceal ment. It hides its own deformity from many who are under its influence. The subtlety of Satan is great; he is said to deceive the whole world (Rev. xii. 9). Suppose he should have deceived you! If acting under his influence you should have deceived yourself! Your sin may be hid from men, it may be hid from yourself, but it is not hid from God. His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. He searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men. He knows exactly what is your state, and it would be well for you to know it; for if it is bad, it may now be changed, —or if it is good, you may rejoice and bless God for it. The revealing day is coming; then if wrong, God will set our iniquities before his face, and our secret sins in the light of his countenance. He will expose every secret sinner. He will show to the whole world what the children of Israel have been doing in the dark. Hear his own word, "God shall bring every work into judgment, *with every secret thing*, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. xii. 14). The sins that are hid now will be hid no longer; but then shall be brought to pass the fearful prediction written, "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlast

ing burnings?" (Isa. xxxiii. 14). Fear now may drive us to the Saviour, but there will then be no Saviour to flee to. The Judge on the throne will act justly and impartially, and will render to every man according to his deeds. Many will be condemned who expected to be acquitted. Many will be driven to hell, who made sure of being invited to heaven. Every false covering will then be stripped off, every deceitful bosom will be laid bare, and it will no more be said of any one, "*His sin is hid.*"

But there is another and better sense in which our sins may be hidden, and that is, by obtaining the pardon of them. If we detect our sins, if we confess them before God, if we plead the blood and obedience of Jesus for their pardon, God will *blot them out*; he will *cover them*, so as to *conceal them for ever*. Then we shall know what the Psalmist meant when he exclaimed, "Oh, the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Oh, the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2). When God forgives the penitent sinner, who stands before the throne of his grace, pleading the merits of his Son, he casts all his sins behind his back, or he throws them into the depths of the sea. They are thus covered, hidden, and concealed for ever. Let us, therefore, conceal our sins no longer; let us confess them before God, and obtain the pardon of them; and let us never profess before our

fellow-men what we do not really possess. Let us make our lives the index of our hearts. "May the grace of God that bringeth salvation, teach us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus iii. 11—14).

O that I could repent!
With all my idols part;
And to thy gracious eye present
A humble contrite heart!
A heart with grief opprest,
For having griev'd my God;
A troubled heart that cannot rest,
Till sprinkled with thy blood!

Jesus on me bestow,
The penitent desire;
With true sincerity of woe
My aching breast inspire;
With softening pity look,
And melt my hardness down;
Strike with thy love's resistless stroke,
And break this heart of stone!

THE TEST.

Prove me now. MAL. iii. 10.

THE Lord loves to have his people near to him, walking closely with him, and proving the constancy of his care and love. But they neglect him, wander from him, and grieve his loving heart. Still, he cannot neglect them; he will not give them up, but calls after them, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." He expostulates with them, "Will a man rob God?" He charges sin upon them, that he may affect them, and bring them to repentance; he says, "Ye have robbed me." And he tells them in what, even in withholding their "tithes and offerings." He tells them they are "under a curse," even the "whole nation;" surely, then, he will disown, discard, and give them up. No, anything but this. He exhorts them to duty, to put him to the proof, and pledges himself to open the windows of heaven, and pour out such a blessing, that there should not be room enough to receive it. Wondrous grace this! Astonishing display of forbearance and condescending mercy! Beloved we are in similar circumstances and God speaks to us in this word. We have wandered from him,—we have robbed him,—we are under his frown,—and he invites us to "prove him now." Let us fix our attention upon these words a few moments.

First, let us look at *the period*, "NOW." It was a season of darkness; for sin had drawn a cloud over them. The Sun of Righteousness did not shine upon them. The ordinances of God were not attended with power. The saints were not lively. The priests were not devout, devoted and determined in God's cause. The daughter of Zion was covered with a cloud. It was a trying time. Their labours were not crowned with success. Selfishness characterized most of the people. They were questioning God's distinguishing love to them. The ordinances were changed. Men kept the best for themselves, and offered only the refuse to God, even "the blind and the lame." God's altar was polluted, his day was profaned, and his name was dishonoured. They had long been in a backsliding state, and they had spoken stoutly against God. The season, therefore, was very discouraging. What could they expect? What could they plead? How could they look to the Lord to do any great thing for them? Whether they looked at themselves, or at the church, back to the past, or around on the present, every thing looked discouraging, and was calculated to cast them down. And now it is that the Lord appears; he says, I am willing to receive you, to bless you, and to restore you to prosperity and dignity; "PROVE ME NOW." Observe,—

Secondly, *the direction*, or *exhortation*, "PROVE ME." Examine my promises. What have I led you to expect? What have I promised to give?

How do you read in my word? Take the promises which I have made, look narrowly into them, examine them carefully, and see what they contain. Read the history of my church. See what I have done for my people. Look back, and converse with the years that are gone by. "Remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Attend to my requirements. Do what I bid you, and do it because I bid you. Set your heart upon my house, and seek to promote my cause. Show zeal in my service, and concern for my honour. "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse." Be just for God. Be honest to your profession. Perform your vows. Fulfil your engagements. Deny yourselves, and act in character as professors of my holy religion. Put yourself into such a condition, that I can bestow my blessing upon you honourably. Show that you repent of your selfishness, dishonesty, and various sins. Prove that you honestly desire my smile, my sanction, and my blessing. Meet me in my house, and "let us reason together." Meet me at my throne, and "let us plead together." Let it be seen that you really want a revival of religion, and that you are in down right earnest to obtain my blessing. Put away all shams, all make-believes, all mere formal ceremonies, and return to the days of thy youth, For "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and

the first fruits of his increase" was dedicated. Be hearty *now*, as you were then. Be decided *now*, as you were then. Be unworldly *now* as you were then. Carry out the precepts of my word *now*, as you did then. This is the way to prove me. To this I invite you. To this course I exhort you. For I wait to be gracious unto you; I desire to do you good. What say you? Will you prove me and obtain a blessing?

Beloved, God wishes us to prove the truth of his word. The willingness of his heart to bless us. His word is true, and yet many of his promises are not fulfilled to us. How is it? It must be, that they imply conditions which we have not fulfilled, or a state of mind to which we have not attained. He desires us to prove the faithfulness of his character, as a promising and performing God. His faithfulness is like the great mountains. His faithfulness reaches to the clouds. He cannot forfeit his character, or deny himself. Still, some of the promises which suit us, are not fulfilled to us. How is it? God is faithful. He is true to his word. Yes, but we have been unfaithful. We have been false and fickle. We have gone away from his ordinances, and have not kept them. He has righteously hid his face from us, and withheld the promised blessing. His heart has been grieved by us, and, therefore, his hand has not been open to us. But now he says, "Repent and turn from your evil ways," and prove the truth of my word, and my faithfulness to my character, as a

prayer-hearing and promise-performing God. He would have us prove the unchangeableness of his nature. He says, "I am Jehovah, I change not." I am now just what I was in the days of your prosperity; I am what I was when I delivered your fathers from Egypt, brought back my people from Babylon, and wrought wonderously by my word in apostolic times. There has been no change in me, the change is in you. You have changed, and you must change again. You must come back to the point from which you wandered. When you do so, you will find me the same God, —the same loving Father; and see that I am as ready to receive, to pardon, and to give good things, as ever I was in the days of old. You must show the same love to my truth, the same zeal in my cause, the same tenderness of my honour, the same faith at my throne, the same fervour in my service, the same readiness to support my interest, the same desire for the conversion of souls, the same affection for my people, and the same dedication to my service, and then "I will open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, and there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Beloved, God loves to be put to the test. He says to us, "Try me; but do it honestly, from a real desire to obtain and enjoy my blessing. See if you observe my precepts, whether I will not soon fulfil my promises." He gives us opportunities for trying him. Times of trouble, times of comparative barrenness, times like the present

are opportunities to prove the Lord. He honours obedience to his own directions, attention to his own exhortations. For though our obedience cannot merit any thing at his hand, or obeying deserve his blessing, yet he has so connected obedience and blessing, that we have no right to expect the one without the other. The rule by which he proceeds in blessing his church is, "Them that honour me, I will honour." Thus he secures our sanctification, while he manifests his sovereign and unmerited grace. He speaks to every reader of this piece,—to every member of his ONE CHURCH,—to every soul that is desirous of being useful in the world, or that longs to see his cause prosper and flourish,—and he says, "PROVE ME NOW." "I will bless you, if you are willing to be blessed. I will make you a blessing if you are prepared to observe my directions. I will be God,—I will be the Sovereign,—I will be Master,—I will maintain my rights, even while I confer my favours,—and if you are willing that I should be so, and will prove it by your conduct, then I will pour you out a blessing." See, then, why we have not had the blessing. There has been some Achan, some golden wedge, some Babylonish garment, in the camp. Some sin has been indulged, some Agag has been spared, some duty has been neglected, some cross has been avoided, or some sacrifice has been withheld. But, after all, God says to us again, "PROVE ME NOW." It is not too late. My hand is not closed for

ever. I have not recalled my promise. I have not left the throne of grace. I have not shut up my loving-kindness in displeasure. Brethren let us examine,—determine,—return to the Lord,—put him to the proof—and obtain the much needed blessing.

Supreme High-priest, the pilgrim's light
My heart for thee prepare;
Thine image stamp, and deeply write
Thy superscription there:
Ah, let my forehead bear thy seal,
My arm thy badge retain,
My heart the inward witness feel
That I am born again!

Into thy humble mansion come,
Set up thy dwelling here;
Possess my heart, and leave no room
For sin to harbour there:
Ah, give me, Lord, the single eye,
Which aims at nought but thee;
I fain would live, and yet not I—
Let Jesus live in me.

O that the penetrating sight
And eagle's eye were mine!
Undazzled at the boundless light,
Of majesty divine;
That with the armies of the sky
I too may sit and sing,
Add, Saviour, to the eagle's eye,
The dove's aspiring wing.

THE DANGEROUS PROGRESS.

They walk on in darkness. PSALM lxxxii. 5.

MIND must be in motion. The minds of sinners make progress, but it is in the wrong path. They started wrong. They will not believe that they are wrong. Therefore they walk on to their own destruction. It is a painful sight to see thousands and tens of thousands of pilgrims passing through this world, and all going wrong. Every step they take leaves us less hope, and gives the Prince of darkness more power over them. In temporal things they see clearly enough, but in spiritual things they are stone-blind. "*They walk on in darkness.*"

Darkness is the emblem of *ignorance.* The parties we refer to are ignorant of their true state before God, of the character of God who made them, of the just desert of sin, of the only Saviour who can deliver them, of the way of escape opened up before them, and the dreadful doom that awaits them. They walk on in ignorance; if they did not, they must either fly to the Lord Jesus to save them, or be truly wretched. Darkness represents *sin.* These parties live in the violation of God's holy law, neglecting Christ's gracious gospel, and making self the end of their existence. They live *to* themselves. They live *for* themselves. They neglect God's require-

ments, they despise his invitations, they turn their backs on his throne of grace, they treat his book with contempt, they waste his day in idleness and folly, and yet talk as if they expected he would have mercy upon them at last. They walk on in sin, and yet hope to realize the promise made to obedience. They yield to Satan, indulge the flesh, dishonour God, proving that "they walk on in darkness." Darkness represents *danger*. These persons are in imminent danger. Disease may arrest them any hour, and death may remove them out of this world any moment. Disease introduces death, death ushers into the presence of God, and God dooms the careless sinner to hell. He may be in health in the morning, but a corpse at noon. He may be on earth at noon, but in hell at night. He walks upon snares. He is surrounded by the officers of justice. He may be seized any moment. Once seized, hope departs, despair approaches, and outer darkness closes up the scene.

And yet they walk on thoughtless. They wile away time, neglect opportunities of escape, disregard the warning voice, and perish in their own deceivings. Gallio like, they care for none of these things. They say they shall not be worse off than others. As if it were any relief to be no worse than others, where all are in misery, agony and woe. Not worse off than others! Yes, they will; for it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for them. Not worse off than others! Indeed they

will, for the men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment and condemn them. Not worse off than others! This is a mistake, for careless, indifferent, Christ-rejecting sinners, will "receive the greater damnation."

Oh, my fellow-sinner, whose eye may now be passing over these lines, let me beseech you to think, reflect, consider; you are walking on in darkness, and dreadful will be your end if you persevere! God's word is light; come to it that you may discover your true state and condition. The ordinances of the gospel, especially the preaching of the word, are intended to enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. The Holy Spirit, who opens the blind eyes, is promised to every one that asks; ask, then, and receive, that you may see wondrous things out of God's law. Have a seat where the gospel is preached, and fill it. Have a Bible of your own, and read it. Have a place for private prayer, and frequent it. Never rest, or allow your soul to enjoy repose, until you know what the Apostle means when he speaks of being "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Walk no longer in darkness, but come to the light that your deeds may be reproved; for if you do not, you will learn by bitter experience, the meaning of our Lord's words, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world, through him, might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he

that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John iii. 17—20).

"*They walk on in darkness,*" but if they do, and persevere in doing so, how fearful will their end be. It will be misery without mercy, darkness without light, despair without prospect of deliverance; and all the result of a wilful determination to "walk on in darkness." They may fancy they have light, for there is a false hope, unwarranted joy, unfounded peace, and mistaken expectations. Therefore every one should examine carefully and closely, and never rest but on the Rock of ages, hope but on the ground of the atonement, or rejoice but in Christ Jesus. There is light for those that sit in darkness, and the shadow of death. There is a luminary which enlivens while it enlightens. That light is gospel truth. That luminary is Christ Jesus. He is a luminary to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of God's people Israel. Reader, come to him. He calleth thee. He says, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and I will give thee light." Come to him confessing your sins, deploring your darkness, and beseeching him to enlighten your eyes, lest you sleep the

sleep of death. Turn from your present course, and enter in at the strait gate; stretch out your hand to Jesus, that he may lead you in the way everlasting. Then will you soon sing with the Psalmist, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the light of the living."

This is the way, walk ye in it. It is a pleasant way. It is a safe way. It will lead to honour. It will conduct to glory and to God. This path is like the shining light, it shineth more and more unto the perfect day. "This you will know, if you follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he will come unto you as the former, and as the latter rain upon the earth." May the Lord bless these lines to every reader, and to his glorious name shall be all the praise.

O thou slaughtered Lamb of God,
From the world's foundation slain,
By thy sacrificial blood
Wash out all my guilty stain.

Clothe my spirit's nakedness
With a covering from above,
Put me on my spotless dress,
Wrap me up in heavenly love.

THE MOURNING DOVE.

I did mourn as a dove. ISAIAH xxxviii. 14.

So said Hezekiah, referring to his sickness and expected death. He felt sad. He was very sorrowful. Just so many of the Lord's people are now, when suddenly laid low by disease, and death appears immediately before them. They did not expect to be called away from the employments and enjoyments of the present world so soon. Therefore they are sad. They do not vividly realize either their interest in Jesus, or the glories of the invisible world, and therefore they are sorrowful. Doubts spring up in their minds. Gloomy fears rise in their hearts. Satan hurls his fiery darts at them. The special comforts of the Holy Spirit are withheld. They look into themselves, or back upon their past lives, instead of looking simply to Jesus, and therefore they are cast down. Their days appear to be numbered, their plans are frustrated, and their purposes are broken off, and they mournfully say, "*I shall not see the Lord, the Lord in the land of the living.*" Their spirits sink, their prospects are dark, and they go mourning all the day long. They mourn like doves.

The dove has a social nature. So has the Christian. He is formed for society, yet not for any society. For as the dove will not associate

with the raven, the kite, or the rook; so the Lord's doves cannot feel at home, or enjoy the society of the Lord's enemies. Sinners are at home with sinners, but saints are only at home with saints. The dove only enjoys the company of the dove, and the believer only enjoys the fellowship of believers. He prays, "Gather not my soul with sinners, but let me be numbered among thy chosen."—The attachment of the dove to its mate is strong and permanent. So the true Christian is strongly attached to Christ. No substitute for Jesus can be found. True, he sometimes questions his own love, and is jealous of his loving Lord; but this only proves that his attachment is sincere. He mourns for him when he does not enjoy him, and is willing to resign any thing and every thing for him. Union to Christ, and communion with Christ, are the greatest blessings in his estimation, and in the darkest season he sighs out in secret, "Oh, to be one with Christ!" "Oh, to enjoy close and hallowed fellowship with Jesus." No substitute for Christ can be found, in his estimation. No other object is worthy of his highest love. To be alone with Christ, is his choicest happiness; and if Jesus is sensibly present, the absence of others is not painfully felt.—The dove is of a plaintive spirit, and so is the true believer. In company he often appears joyous and full of spirits, he is even perhaps bold and daring; but when alone in secret, there is a plaintiveness about him. How plaintive sometimes are his

praises! How plaintive often are his prayers! Gethsemane or Calvary will draw out this peculiarity of his nature, for there, in the most joyous seasons, in the most prosperous times, he will mourn over a wounded, bleeding, dying Saviour; even as one mourneth for his only son, and he is in bitterness as one who is in bitterness for his first-born. There is often a soft, a sad plaintiveness in his meditations, ejaculations, and private devotions, and he often feels a strange pleasure therein.

The dove is a mournful bird, and now the Christian is a mournful man. He mourns sometimes because of the loss of his Lord's presence. He cannot realize nearness to Jesus. His Lord is not sensibly present with him, either in public ordinances or in private devotions, and this makes him sad. His heart is set upon his Saviour, and his heaven is only found in the enjoyment of his Saviour's love. Oh, how dull the service to him if he finds not Jesus there. Inwardly and silently does his spirit mourn; and mournfully does he pray, plead, and entreat his beloved Lord to reveal himself once more. The sermon may be good, the hymns spiritual, the devotions fervent, the brethren kind, but if Jesus is not there, or is not enjoyed, there is no satisfaction,—the soul goes away mourning. So in private, however lively the gift of prayer, however still the enemy of souls, however favourable the opportunity, if Jesus is not enjoyed, there is mourning. The performance of duty will not

do. Occupying the usual time in the usual place is not enough. The dove wants its mate, or its mournful cooing shows its dissatisfaction; and the Christian must enjoy the presence of Jesus, or he will mourn in his complaint, and make a noise. He often mourns and longs for the return of his dear Redeemer from the skies. The advent is to him the blessed hope. The coming of Jesus the object of his ardent desire. In plaintive strains like the lonely dove, he sits and sighs, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Thus he is looking for, and hastening to, the coming of the day of God.—He mourns also over the condition of his fellow-men. When they sin, he sighs. He is numbered among those who sigh and cry, for all the abominations that are done in the land. Sin is the object of his hatred, but the sinner is the object of his pity. He often wonders that he can be so cheerful as he is, when he realizes that he is surrounded by those who spend their time and talents in insulting his God and Saviour; and who, though his brethren, according to the flesh, are rushing headlong to hell by thousands. "Oh," he says, "that my head were waters, and my eyes fountains of tears, that I might weep day and night for the dishonour they do to my Lord, and the destruction which they are bringing upon themselves." He knows the value of the soul, he knows something of the terrors of the Lord, and therefore he mourns to see thousands so infatuated by sin, as to choose death in the error of

their ways. If God has converted us by his grace, set our hearts against sin, and given us to know the misery and torment from which we are delivered, we shall heartily mourn over those who appear determined to perish, and be willing to do any thing we can to rescue them from so dreadful a doom.—But perhaps there is nothing that makes them mourn so frequently, or so much, as their want of conformity to Jesus. They all want to be exactly like him, and every fresh discovery they have of their unlikeness to him, causes them to mourn, sigh, and pray, "Lord Jesus, make me like thy blessed self." They would be holy as he was holy. They would be useful as he was useful. They want to have the same mind in them which was also in Christ Jesus. They wish to be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and because they are not, they mourn like a dove.

Reader, are you one of the Lord's mourning doves? Do you mourn over sin, after Jesus, and to be sanctified wholly, in body, soul, and spirit? If so, "Blessed are ye that mourn now, for ye shall be comforted." But if you enjoy the world, are happy in unholiness, or laugh at sin, "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep." Those who mourn on earth will rejoice and sing in heaven. Those who mourn now, because Jesus is away, will shout for joy when he shall come again the second time without sin unto salvation. Happy mourners, you sow in tears, but you shall reap in joy. You

have a dripping seed time, but you shall have a sunny harvest. The causes of the mourning will soon be all removed, and then you will rejoice and be exceeding glad for ever. Your Saviour is coming to silence your groans, to comfort your hearts, and to receive you to himself. He once groaned on earth, he mourned over the condition of our guilty world, he wept as he anticipated his murderers' doom; but pefect joy has long been his portion, and it will be yours soon. But oh, sinner, sinner, if you go on in sin, if you persist in your present course, you will be cast into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for ever. You will mourn at last, and repent your folly for ever. But, like foolish Esau, you will repent too late, for you will find it impossible to change the mind of the Most High, though you seek it carefully with tears. For as you now read unmoved the sufferings of his beloved Son, as you are now unaffected by the sweet messages and loving invitations of his mercy, so he will for ever view unmoved your torments and tears, and turn a deaf ear to your prayers and groans. Turn, then, turn unto the Lord *now*, with weeping, mourning, and supplication; for therefore doth the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore is the Lord exalted, that he may show mercy unto you.

A FEARFUL CONFESSION.

I was reading the other day of a good man, who went to visit a poor creature who was suffering on the borders of eternity, and he asked him, "Do you think that Christ can save you?" He replied, "*I believe he can, but I will not ask him.*" There is something very dreadful in this reply, because it displays such rebellion and enmity against the Lord Jesus. The sinner was perishing; he was within a few steps of the burning lake, where he must suffer the just wrath of God for ever; there was *one* that could save him, and *but* one; he knew this, and yet he deliberately said, "*I will not ask him.*" How very few would have the hardihood to say this with the mouth, and yet how many, how very many say it by their conduct. They admit that they need salvation, that the Lord Jesus Christ can save them, and yet they will not ask him. They know that they must die, that they may die suddenly and soon, that if Jesus does not save them they are lost for ever, yet they will not ask him. They hope to be saved some time and some how, and they hope that the Lord Jesus will save them, but they will not ask him.

Reader, how is it with you? You must live. You must live for ever, for your soul can never die. You must live in glorious happiness, or in dreadful suffering. Your state in eternity depends

on your course in time. If you perish it will be for your sins. If you are saved it will be by God's free grace. If you are saved by grace it must be by the Lord Jesus Christ, for there is no other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we can be saved. Salvation is by the Lord Jesus Christ exclusively. He can save, for he has made an atonement for sin, he has satisfied the claims of justice, he has honoured the law of God, and has removed every impediment out of the way of our access to God and acceptance with God. He is willing to save, and saving sinners gratifies the love of his benevolent heart. There is not a sinner to be found, who can say, that he applied, and the Lord Jesus refused to save him. But there are thousands in hell at this moment, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, who believed that he could save them, but they would not ask him. Is not this a fearful thought? Is it not a striking proof of the truth of the Apostle's statement, "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be?" There are thousands upon earth also displaying the same opposition to God. Many of them sit under the preaching of the gospel, appear to pay close attention to the preacher, and talk about religion, sermons, preachers, and religious people, they know that Jesus can save them, they admit that they need salvation, and yet they never ask him.

Now what I want to get at is this, Do *you*

believe that the Lord Jesus can save *you?* Are you willing to be saved by him? Have you asked him to save you? *When* did you begin to do so? *Why* did you begin to do so? *How* did you ask him? *Are you* saved by him? Few questions can be more important than these. Will you seriously and solemnly attend to them for a few moments? I see not how you can be better employed. *When* did you, for the first time, go upon your knees, feeling that you were a poor, lost sinner, sensible that if you are not saved by the Lord Jesus, you must perish for ever, and ask him as a great favour, of his mere mercy, to save you? Can you recollect the time when, the place where, and the circumstances under which you did so? Or, Is there no such period in your history? Is there no spot on God's earth where you bowed the knee to seek salvation from the wrath to come? If there is not, your case is sad, very sad. To have lived so long, in the midst of so many dangers and diseases, exposed to death every moment, knowing that death is introductory to judgment, and yet never to have bowed the knee to seek the pardon of sin, and ask the Son of God to save you, is evidence sufficient that you are in a most fearful state. But if you have asked for salvation, *Why* did you seek it at the hands of Jesus? Was it because he is appointed of God to save, because he is the one great sacrifice for sin, because he only can save you and honour the law and government of God in doing so? Did you

see that there was salvation in none other? That he was just suited to your case? That he was worthy of your trust and confidence? That you must be saved by him or perish everlastingly? If with a burden of guilt on your conscience, if with sin staring you in the face, if with the fear of hell working in your soul, if from a secret power operating in your heart, you have asked the Lord Jesus to save you, happy are you, for he will never refuse you. But *how* did you ask him? Did you feel at a loss for words? Did you sigh, groan, and cry in secret before him? Did you persevere in your application though beset with fears, tempted to doubt, and often ready to conclude that your petition would be refused?

Did your heart go with your words when you could use any, or with your sighs and groans when you could not? Did you plead like a criminal for pardon, a hungry man for food, or a condemned malefactor for his life? Did you feel that you must have salvation or perish, and therefore could not give over? Did you search the Scriptures to see what the Lord had said for your encouragement there, and then go and plead each word of encouragement before him again? *Are you saved by him?* Have you any assurance of your sins being pardoned? Have you ever been able to call God your Father, to feel that his anger is turned away from you, and to bless him for sending his Son into the world to save sinners? Do you know what it is for the Spirit of God to bear witness with your spirit that you

are a child of God? Are you walking with God, and looking upon death as going home to be for ever with God? Or, to return to our starting point, are you one who can say, "I know that Christ can save me;" but who must add, "I have never asked him?" This is sad, very sad, but it would be still worse if you were to say with the poor creature whose words led to these remarks, "*I will not ask him.*" Not ask him, then do you not deserve to perish? If salvation is to be had for asking for, for seeking, and you will not ask or seek, can you complain if the Lord should say, "Then take your own course, have your own choice, perish in your obstinacy and enmity?" But perhaps you are ready to exclaim, "God forbid that I should ever say that!" But suppose you do not say it, and yet act as though you did, where is the difference? The lips may not utter the words, but the heart is under the influence of the idea, for the life is but the exposition of the thoughts and purposes of the heart. O my dear friend, think, think of going to hell, and languishing for ever there under the terrible but just wrath of a holy God, and to be tormented to all eternity by devils and lost souls, who pointing to you say, "He knew that Christ could save him, but he would not ask him," and for conscience eternally to echo, "*he would not ask him!*"

THE SOLDIER'S PRAYER.

Save me for thy mercies' sake. Ps. xxxi. 16.

Some persons tell us they know not how to pray. This proves that they are not accustomed to pray, and are therefore in a very dangerous state: and that they do not understand the nature of prayer, and are therefore very ignorant of God's word. Prayer is the exercise of the heart. It is the soul speaking with God. It is just telling the Lord what we feel, what we fear, and what we desire. It is exceedingly simple. To the true Christian it is quite natural. He prays for all he needs, whenever he is troubled, tried, or put to pain. There can be no religion without prayer, or prayer without the knowledge of God. If we know God, we shall draw near to him, speak with him, pour out our hearts before him, ask favours of him, and receive blessings from him.

My friend, do you pray? Do you pray regularly? Do you pray because you feel that you cannot live without it? Do you pray because you love it? Is praying to you as natural as breathing? It should be so. It will be so, if you become a real Christian, and walk closely with God. Scriptural prayers are generally short prayers, they are full of meaning, there are no waste words in them, but every word tells.

Here is such a prayer at the head of this article, let us look at it for a minute or two—it is *a soldier's prayer*, for David was a soldier, and a great one too. Observe,

First, *it is a sinner praying;* for he prays for salvation. No one needs salvation but a sinner. It is a sinner taught of God; for no one seeks salvation until taught by the Holy Spirit that he is lost, ruined, and undone. It is a sinner drawn by God, for no one goes to God for salvation until attracted by the secret power of the Most High. It is a sinner pleading with God. He feels he is in the presence of God—he feels that he must be saved by God, or be lost for ever. It is a sinner asking a great favour of God, the greatest favour he could ask; or that God could give. Nothing trifling fills his thoughts. Nothing mean engages his attention. He wishes to make sure work. He wants to get God on his side. He pleads as one in earnest, as one that is sincere, as one that will not easily be put off. His life, his eternal life, depends on his obtaining his suit. He feels that this is his opportunity, and he must not let it slip; but he must improve it for the most important purpose. He knows what he is about. He feels the importance of his employment. He prays as if he meant every word he utters, as if every word came up from the very bottom of his heart. "Save me for thy mercies' sake."

Now, my dear friend, you are a sinner, you need salvation, but do you *feel* your need of it?

Do you go to God on purpose to entreat him to save you? Do you pray in downright earnest, as if you really meant to obtain salvation, if God will bestow it upon such a one as you are? If so, blessed are you; if not, your state is truly dangerous. God's own children, his beloved ones, can never rest satisfied until *they obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.*

Secondly. It is a sinner seeking a great blessing, even salvation. Now what is salvation? It is deliverance: deliverance from all real evils both temporal and spiritual. A present deliverance. A perfect deliverance. An eternal deliverance. A deliverance from the guilt of sin, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus upon the conscience. A deliverance from the power of sin, by the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. A deliverance from all present evils, by the certain working of a special providence; and a deliverance from the wrath of God and the flames of hell, by the mercy of God, the merit of Christ, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is of the Lord *alone.* No one can save but the Almighty. No works of the creature, no ceremonies of men, no sufferings in the flesh, will ever save a sinner; or go any way toward his salvation. It is God's work. The heart must be changed, and no one can change it but God. The sins must be pardoned, and no one can forgive sins but God. The person must be protected from Satan and other foes, and no one can protect it but God. God glories in

saving sinners. He will get eternal honour by it, and he will not give his glory to another, or his honour to any of his creatures. Friend, God *can* save you. He *must* save you, or you will be for ever lost. But if you wish God to save you —you must ask him. You must go to him, you must plead with him, nor must you give over until you prevail. Success is certain if prayer is hearty, earnest, and importunate.

Thirdly. It is a sinner seeking a great blessing on God's own terms. Salvation is of grace, or it is a favour. No one deserves to be saved. No one can purchase, or procure salvation by any thing he can do or suffer. If man has it, God must give it. If God give it, he will give it freely. He delights in mercy. He is never backward to show mercy. But he will have us feel our misery, our poverty, and our obligation to him. He will save us on the ground of his mercy, but on no other ground. Out of pure pity to us. Out of tender compassion for us. For the sake of his own mercy, that is, to prove it, to display it, to exalt it, to bring honour to it. God's mercy is infinite, and cannot be exhausted. It is everlasting, and cannot change. It is free, and cannot be purchased. It is glorified in sinners, and therefore we may with confidence pray. "Save me for thy mercies' sake."

Fellow soldier, are you saved? Has God saved you for his mercies' sake? If so, you have felt yourself lost, you have despaired of all help in yourself, or from any creature, you have

fled for refuge to Jesus; and in answer to prayer you have obtained mercy. Is it so? Then I give you joy. I own you as my brother in Christ. I exhort you to cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. I beseech you to tell your comrades what God has done for you. Never mind a sneer, or even a profane oath; but pity, pray for, and plead with them. As they are you were once; and as they are, you would be this day but for sovereign and distinguishing grace. Praise God for what he has done for you, and endeavour to bring others to him.

Fellow soldier, are you careless about salvation? Are you going down the stream? Are you doing as your comrades do, and leaving the future to take care of itself? I beseech you, reflect for one moment. You *are* an immortal being. You *must* live for ever. You *may* live in glory, honour, and unspeakable happiness. You *will* live in shame, pain, and inconceivable torment if you pursue your present course. Stop! I beseech you stop! Think! I beseech you think!! God in his *mercy* will save *you* if you seek him. God in his *justice* will damn *you* if you neglect him. His mercy is infinite, but his justice is infinite too. There are thousands of soldiers in hell at this moment; because they despised and slighted God's mercy, will you increase the number? There are many, very many soldiers in heaven, because they sought and found God's mercy—will you go and unite with them? Will you? Say, will you? Which shall it be, heaven or hell?

Which? Which? Infinitely gracious God, have mercy upon the soldier, who is now reading these lines—save, "O save him for thy mercies' sake." "Deliver him from going down to the pit," and raise him to a state of grace here, and glory hereafter, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Awake, my soul! lift up thine eyes;
See where thy foes against thee rise;
In long array, a numerous host;
Awake, my soul! or thou art lost.

Here giant danger threatening stands,
Mustering his pale terrific bands;
There pleasure's silken banners spread,
And willing souls are captive led.

See where rebellious passions rage,
And fierce desires and lusts engage;
The meanest foe of all the train
Has thousands and ten thousands slain.

Thou tread'st upon enchanted ground;
Perils and snares beset thee round;
Beware of all, guard every part,
But most the traitor in thy heart.

Come then, my soul! now learn to wield
The weight of thine immortal shield;
Put on the armour from above
Of heavenly truth, and heavenly love.

The terror and the charm repel,
And powers of earth, and powers of hell;
The Man of Calvary triumphed here:
Why should his faithful followers fear!

THE SOLDIER'S PURPOSE.

Thou hast known my purpose. 2 TIM. iii. 10.

SAUL of Tarsus was a rebel in arms against the King of kings. He hated his person, despised his government, and denied his claims. He mustered and headed a troop, with a determination if possible to dethrone him. He arrested, imprisoned, and obtained the death warrant of every faithful subject that came within his reach. He was exceedingly mad against all the adherents to the cause of the Prince of peace. He said, "I will not have Him to reign over me." Not only so, but he made up his mind that he should reign over no one else, if he could prevent it. He persecuted all his followers in Judea, and obtained a commission to carry the war against them into Damascus. He mustered his forces, headed his troop, and set out for Damascus, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against them. His purpose now was to slay utterly both old and young, and to blot out the name and cause of Jesus from under heaven. But as he was on his journey, just as he was drawing near to Damascus, a bright light from heaven suddenly shone upon him, and the Lord Jesus appeared unto him. The manifestation of Christ instantly changed his mind and altered his purpose, and he at once enlisted in the army of Immanuel.

He arose from the ground, to which he had fallen, went into Damascus, and was blind for three days. At the end of that time he was restored to sight, sworn in before Ananias, and immediately put on the regimentals of the once hated Nazarene. He soon learned his exercise, and appeared very prominent in the ranks of God's elect. From the day he enlisted his purpose was formed, through his whole life it was carried out, and therefore to every one who knew him intimately, he could say "Thou hast fully known my purpose." The fixed, settled, solemn purpose of Paul, embraced four principal points:—

First, *to secure his own salvation.* His heart was set upon this. He was determined to "win Christ." To make his "calling and election sure." He therefore gave himself to prayer. He lived by faith on the Son of God. He crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. He put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man. He laboured that whether present in the body, or absent from it, he might be accepted of the Lord. He kept under his body, and brought into subjection; lest after having preached to others, he himself should be castaway. He did not rest satisfied with a single evidence, or an uncertain hope, but he aimed at certainty and obtained it. Hear how confidently he speaks, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me,

and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. Again, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Phil. i. 21. Every one of us also should make it our first, our grand object, to secure our own salvation. To obtain the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of our sins. To have Christ formed in our hearts "the hope of glory." To know, "that we have passed from death unto life," by our unfeigned love to the brethren. To commit our souls to Jesus, to be washed in his blood, to be clothed in his righteousness, to be sanctified by his Spirit, and to be preserved by his providence and power: that so we may say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And thus live "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began." Paul's purpose was,

Secondly, *To bring as many sinners to the Saviour as he possibly could.* No sooner was Paul enlisted and sworn in, than he became a recruiting sergeant. He endeavoured to enlist every person that he could In order to this, he was constantly speaking of Jesus to all with whom he came in contact. In public he preached Jesus and in private he talked of Jesus. He was always telling those about him, of the glories of his person, the nature of his sacrifice, the perfection of his work, the kindness of his heart, the happiness that was found in his service, the equity of the war which he had proclaimed, and

the glorious crowns which he had promised. He assured every rebel of pardon the very moment he laid down his arms, and embraced the terms of reconciliation. He often appealed to his own bad character and detestable conduct, with the reception he met with, the pardon he received, and the honour that was conferred upon him, to prevent the vilest from doubting, and to encourage all that believe. He travelled thousands of miles, suffered the most agonizing pains, endured the greatest hardships, and accommodated himself to all classes of persons, and to all possible circumstances, to enlist sinners into the army of the Saviour. Hear his own words, "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without the law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." 1 Cor. ix. 19—22. Christian soldier, here is your example. You should try to bring all your comrades to Christ. Never yield to discouragement, but putting your trust in the Lord, praying for the power of the Holy Spirit to accompany your feeble efforts, try, try, try. God works by feeble

means. He honours the well-meant endeavour. Speak of Jesus to all who will hear you, and you know not who God may dispose to listen to you until you try. Speak to all of Christ, many persons will listen to a soldier speaking of Jesus, who would not listen to a regular minister. Let Paul's purpose be yours, to enlist as many for Christ as you can. You may assure them of a welcome reception, large bounty, good pay, excellent quarters, kind officers, and high honours when the campaign is ended.—Paul's purpose was,

Thirdly, *To honour Christ as highly as possible.* He never wearied of speaking of him. He never thought that he could speak too highly of Christ. Indeed he considered no subject worthy of a thought in compare with Christ. Christ was the centre toward which he constantly tended, the circle within which he moved. He preferred the weakness of Christ, to the strength of men; the shame of Christ, to the honour of men; and even suffering for Christ, to living at ease with sinners. Christ was enthroned in Paul's affections, and he endeavoured to obtain a throne for him in every human breast. If he preached, he preached Christ. If he wrote, he wrote of Christ. If he gave an example for imitation, it was Christ. If he furnished a powerful motive, it was fetched from Christ. Christ was his Alpha and Omega, his first and last, his all in all. He believed him to be God, and he taught others to believe it. He knew him to be

the only Saviour, and he preached him as such. He rejoiced in his humiliation, and he triumphed in his exaltation. The cross inspired him with hope, but to see his Saviour on the throne, filled him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He lost every thing for Christ, and gloried in the fact that he nad any thing to lose for him. Christ filled his thoughts, his ministry, and his anticiprtions. He looked back at what he was originally, at what he became for us, and then at what he is now, and exclaimed, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. ii. 6—11. Glorious Saviour! Let us endeavour to imitate the good soldier Paul, and show forth the honours of his name, making his praise glorious. Let us exalt him as highly as we can, and endeavour to bring others to exalt him too. Let us labour in his cause, walk by his precepts, suffer for his name, and copy his bright, his blessed example: for he is worthy

for whom we shall do this. Paul's purpose included,

Fourthly, *To glorify God both by doing and suffering.* He looked upon himself as purchased property. As bought out of the most degrading and debasing slavery, on purpose that he might glorify God. And he looked upon all the soldiers of the cross in the same light, therefore writing to the regiment which was laying at Corinth, he said, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."—1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. And lest they should not understand, that he meant, that this principle should be carried out in all the common, and everyday affairs of life, he says again in the same letter, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. x. 31. And writing to the battalion which was quartered at Philippi, among whom some refractory spirits were found, and were trying to do mischief; and referring to his own practice and hope, he says, "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." Phil. i. 20. Brother soldier, let this be our object too. In every plan we form, in every engagement we undertake, in every thing we do, let us aim at the glory of our good and gracious God. Every morning let us ask, "How can I glorify my God to-day?" In

every undertaking let us examine, how we may glorify God in fulfilling it. God is glorified by us, when we trust in his promises—when we walk by his precepts—when we worship at his throne—when we praise him for his mercies—when we spread his truth—when we assist his cause—when we try to benefit his people—when we enlist souls into his army, and when we put on the whole suit of armour he has provided, and with bold and courageous front resist and repel his foes. Let us then endeavour so to plan, to purpose, and to act, that every clear-sighted observer, may see inscribed on every plan, purpose, or performance of ours, "TO THE PRAISE AND GLORY OF GOD." If we glorify God on earth, he will glorify us in heaven. If we honour Christ where we now are, we shall walk with Christ in white robes where he is; and with all that have gotten the victory over Satan, the world, the beast, and his image, we shall stand on the sea of glass, and sing "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Rev. xv. 2, 3.

O remember me for good,
Passing through the mortal vale:
Show me the atoning blood,
When my strength and spirit fail,
Give my gasping soul to see
Jesus crucified for me!

THE SOLDIER'S PURSUIT.

I have pursued mine enemies and destroyed them.
2 SAMUEL xx. 38.

THE writer of these words was a captain in the army of the Lord of hosts. He refers to danger, difficulty, and deliverance. He had been in danger from his foes, these were difficult to conquer, but he was delivered from them. He reviews the past with gratitude; records his conquests with humility, and prepares for future service. The war was not ended, the enemies were not all subdued, the field was not to be abandoned. Just so, should every faithful soldier of the Lord Jesus do. We must not put off our armour until we put on our shroud. We must never enter into a truce with any of our foes. We were enlisted to fight. Our armour was provided for the day of battle, and that day lasts through the whole of the present life. The enemies of our King are our enemies, and (blessed be God), our enemies are the enemies of our King. Let us therefore pursue, let us overtake them, and let us never sheath our sword until we have overcome them. To arms! to arms! the enemy is in the field, and the trumpet sounds to victory!

First. The enemies of the soldier of the Cross, are only the enemies of his King and country.

There is sin; this is the enemy of Jesus, it prostrated him in the garden, it pierced him through and through upon the cross. It is the enemy of his person, his people, and his crown. Sin is in the world, and we must resist it there unto blood. We must give it no quarters, make no allowance for it, never palliate it or treat it with tenderness. It is within us, and we must watch it, oppose it, and seek its extermination and destruction. *No peace with sin*, is the motto of every loyal soldier of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. There is Satan; he is the enemy of Jesus too, we must resist him steadfast in the *faith*. We must give him no place, but strike at him with the sword of the Spirit, and so use the shield of faith, as to quench all his fiery darts. He cares not for argument, he fears not our vows or promises, but he trembles before the word of God and prayer. He hates, but is obliged to fly before the name of the great Captain of our salvation. There is the world; it has apostatized from God, it is in rebellion against God, and does all it can to dishonour God. We must therefore come out of it, and be separate from it. We may pity its poor deluded votaries, but we must hate its practices, maxims and motives. There must be no friendship between us and it, for "if any man be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God." There is death; this is the first-born of sin. It is the King of terrors, and the enemy of human kind. It once seized our Captain, and for a short time brought him under its power.

But he overcame it and triumphed. He overcame it, not merely for himself, but for us; and we by faith in his name, by union to his person, and by close and holy fellowship with him, must overcome it too. Soldier of the cross! here are thy enemies; they are linked together, they are well drilled and determined, they appear invincible: but up and at them, meet them in the name of Jesus, resist them steadfast in the faith, and it shall be said of thee, as of that glorious battalion in the days of old, "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives unto death."

Secondly. The good soldier hates these enemies of his King. He hates them for his King's sake, and he hates them for his own sake. His hatred is just, holy, deep, and abiding. He must hate them, hate them every moment, hate them under every shape and form, or he cannot be loyal to his Prince. His hatred grows with his years, and scriptural meditation deepens and strengthens it. If he views them rightly, he views them as the enemies of his gracious God, the enemies of his loving Saviour, the enemies of his Christian brethren, the enemies of his fellow-creatures, and his own enemies too. Such views must deepen his hatred to them, and lead him to say with an old warrior on the battle field, "Do not I hate them that hate thee, I hate them with perfect hatred." At the word of command from his victorious general, he pursues them through every highway and byeway,

over every mountain and down into every valley, across every plain and into every thicket, in the crowded city and the unpeopled desert. He pursues them as for his life. He thirsts for their life, and sighs for their entire annihilation. His is a bloodless warfare, but it is nevertheless arduous. It is a warfare that calls for sleepless vigilance, untiring zeal, undaunted courage, and unwearied perseverance. And there is no discharge in this war. The armour must never be taken off. The standard must never be struck. The soldier must never quit the field, until his Captain calls him to receive his crown. He seeks the utter destruction of all that is hostile to the divine government, derogatory to his Saviour's honour, injurious to his own character, or calculated to injure his fellow-men. He fights to introduce peace on earth, and to bring glory to God in the highest: and until God has the highest possible glory, and man perfect and uninterrupted peace, he never wishes to quit the field. Noble enterprise this! Glorious calling this! Let every soldier count it his highest honour, nor envy even an angel, for he is in the path to glory, honour, and immortal life. He will gain laurels that will never fade, a diadem that will ever sparkle on his brow, and a title which will dignify him among the highest order of intelligences in a better world. Jesus, Captain, make me a valiant, skilful, victorious soldier in thine army, and I ask no higher honour!

Thirdly. The faithful soldier will certainly

overcome every foe. If his heart is honest, if he is but faithful, victory is absolutely certain. He may be overcome in a skirmish, as many a brave soldier has, but he shall overcome at last. He may occasionally yield to fear and doubt the issue of the contest, but he will prove to be more than a conqueror through Jesus who has loved him. By faith in Christ, by strength received from Christ, and after the example of Christ, he will conquer sin, trample upon Satan, overcome the world, and triumph over death. He will stand at the grave's mouth, with eternity full in view, and with a loud voice and fearless heart, exclaim "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The enemy that shall be destroyed last is death, but it shall be destroyed; and the faithful soldier rise to enjoy a deathless state of existence, beneath unclouded skies, where sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away. O glorious termination of a righteous war! O blessed reward of faithfulness to our illustrious general!

Brother soldier, do you look upon sin as the greatest enemy of God and man? Are you manfully resisting it in yourself, in your comrades, and in the world in general? No matter what you conquer, if you do not conquer sin. Overcome this, and every other foe will soon fall before you. Get your sins pardoned through the blood of Jesus, and strive to subdue your sins

through the Spirit of Christ. Oppose every thing that opposes Jesus. Fight against every thing that would dishonour his name, rob him of his glory, or grieve his loving heart. Make no compromise with the world, it is radically evil. It must be conquered by us, or it will conquer us. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Confidence in Christ's word, dependence on his sacrifice, trust in his veracity, and reliance on his faithfulness, will bring us off victorious over all the powers of earth and hell. Satan cares nothing for the crucifix, but he will flee before the cross. Does he tempt thee to despond because thy sins are great and many? Tell him that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. Does he fill thee with fears of judgment, and try to lead thee to despair? Tell him that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; and that those that come to him, he will in no wise cast out. Look at death through Jesus, and it will lose all its terrors; it will appear stripped of all its formidable power; and it will be seen to be only a sleeping in Jesus, a resting until the mystery of redemption shall be finished. But no unconverted sinner, can be Christ's soldier; and only the soldiers of Jesus gain the victory. Dear reader, are you converted to God? Have you been washed in his blood? Are you clothed in his righteousness? Does his Spirit dwell in you preparing you for glory? Are you relying on his sacrifice alone for your acceptance

with God? And do you strive to please him in all that you do? If so, happy are you, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," you will soon be found in the ranks of God's elect in the New Jerusalem, and enjoy the smile of the Prince of peace for ever. Yet a little while, and duty below will be done, and an eternal discharge will be given, and with it, not a mere pension, but a crown of glory, a weight of glory, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for you.

My Captain sounds th' alarm of war;
"Awake! the powers of hell are near!
To arms! to arms!" I hear him cry,
"'T is yours to conquer or to die!"

Rous'd by the animating sound,
I cast my eager eyes around,
Make haste to gird my armour on,
And bid each trembling fear begone.

Hope is my helmet; faith my shield;
Thy word, my God, the sword I wield;
With sacred truth my loins are girt,
And holy zeal inspires my heart.

Thus armed, I venture on the fight;
Resolved to put my foes to flight;
While Jesus kindly deigns to spread
His conquering banner o'er my head.

In him I hope, in him I trust;
His bleeding cross is all my boast:
Through troops of foes he 'll lead me on
To victory, and the victor's crown.

THE GOOD SOLDIER'S OBJECT.

That he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 2 TIMOTHY ii. 4.

IT is an unspeakable honour to be a soldier of Christ. To be enlisted under his banner, to be sworn into his army, to wear his regimentals, to put on his armour, and learn the use of his spiritual arms. To distinguish his foes from his friends, protecting and honouring the one, and opposing and conquering the other. Every soldier of Christ is chosen to this honour. God, the Father, chooses all the soldiers who are to constitute the army of his Son. His choice of them is a secret, it is the effect of his love, it is a mark of favour. They know nothing about it, until the recruiting sergeant is sent where they are, their minds are inclined to a soldier's life, they are disposed to enlist into the service, they carry out the thought which rules in their heart, and when fully equipped as one of Immanuel's soldiers, and engaged as every good soldier ought to be, opposing their sovereign's foes; then, from the conduct of others, from the change in their own tastes and habits, from the volume of inspiration, and from the Holy Spirit's witness in their hearts, they discover that their present honourable position, and the glorious prospects which are before them, flow from the free favour,

eternal love, and sovereign choice of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. Perceiving this, and realizing the greatness of the honour conferred upon them, they are filled with gratitude, rejoice in their distinction, prefer a soldier's life with its difficulties and dangers to all other, and make it their one object "to please him who hath chosen them to be his soldiers." Happy men, who are soldiers of the cross! Honoured men, who are chosen into the army of the Son of God! Let the business of your life be to please him, who hath so wondrously distinguished you; imitate the example of the good old warriors, who have fought the good fight, conquered every foe, and are now enjoying their Captain's presence, smile, and blessing.

A good soldier will endeavour to ascertain what will please his Captain; and this is easily done, as it is clearly, plainly, and repeatedly stated in his own blessed book. He will always endeavour to do what he ascertains will please him, acting as under his eye, aiming to commend himself to his loving heart in all things. He will make this the one grand business of his life; his chief thought, his warmest desire will be to please his honoured Lord. But what will please our General? *Bright armour.* Every part free from dust, spot, and impurity. Never does a soldier look so well, as when he has his complete suit of armour on, every piece exactly fitting him, and the whole burnished bright, glittering in the rays of the morning sun. And so the

Christian never looks so well, or pleases his Lord so much, as when his loins are girt about with pure truth—having on the polished breastplate of righteousness, in which the commanding officer may see his own face—his feet shod with the bright and shining preparation of the gospel of peace, having on the glittering helmet of salvation, the assured hope of complete deliverance from every foe and fear, having the shield of faith hanging on the arm, ready to catch, quench, and render harmless the fiery darts of the enemy, and having the keen, bright, and powerful sword of the Spirit in his hand, against which no foe can stand, and which no opposing power can break. When the good soldier is thus equipped, with courageous heart, presenting a bold front to the enemies of his King, he pleases him who hath called him to be a soldier. *Regard to orders.* The good soldier pays a close and strict attention to orders, and therefore knows when to march, when to halt, when to charge, when to fire, and when to rest. His will is lost in the will of his Commander; and his strict attention to orders, refusing to do what is not commanded, or to omit any thing which is commanded, pleases him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. *Determined courage.* Fear becomes not the soldier of the Cross. Cowardice is his disgrace. He is required to face any foe, and every foe against which his Captain is pleased to lead him. And when trusting to promised strength, following his victorious

Leader, he goes without inquiry or hesitation against the foes of his King and fatherland, determined to conquer or to die; he pleases him who hath called him to be a soldier. *True loyalty.* The soldier must be whole-hearted to his Prince. He must prefer his Prince's honour to his own ease, his country's safety to his own life. "No surrender," must be his motto; and strong attachment to the royal cause, his ruling passion. He must be determined to defend his Sovereign's prerogatives at any risk, and rather part with every drop of his blood, than see his Monarch robbed of his rights. When the good soldier shows his loyalty by being willing to do, or suffer any thing, rather than compromise the honour of his King, he pleases him who hath chosen him to be his soldier. *Attention to recruits.* Every good soldier is commissioned to make recruits. The King's army needs to be replenished. The number of his soldiers is never too large. He glories in the increase of his troops. We are entrusted with his money to enlist, and are warranted to promise a considerable bounty. We may hold out the highest honours, and point to the brightest prospects, to win our fellows to his cause. And when he sees us striving to make recruits, or having made them, teaching them to adjust their armour, clean their regimentals, learn their exercise, use their arms, and prepare to face the foe with true daring, we may please him who hath chosen us to be his soldiers. *The subjugation of rebels.*

There are many rebels in his empire, some within us, and some without us; and these are to be opposed and subdued. They must yield or die, become his friends, or perish. There is no quarters for a rebel as such, but if he will submit, yield himself up, and become reconciled to his Prince, and join the regular army, there is pardon, acceptance, and the prospect of honour, if we are found crucifying and making an example of the rebels within us, and if we win over to obedience and loyalty the rebels without us, then we please him who hath chosen us to be his soldiers.

Now this is the good soldier's object. He constantly aims to do this, to do it cheerfully, to do it regularly, to do it in a soldier-like manner. He makes this his one business, and only takes other things by the way. May he but please his Lord, he cares not who is displeased with him. May he but win the approbation of his Sovereign, he is not much affected by any reproach that may be heaped upon him. He has given himself up to be a soldier, to be ruled by military law, to be used for the public good, to be sent where his Commander pleases, and to serve faithfully, courageously, and cheerfully until the end of life, or the end of the war. Beloved reader, are you a soldier of the Cross? Have you enlisted into the army of the Prince of Peace? Have you been taken into the stripping room, has every rag of your own clothing been taken from you, and have you been clothed

in regimental dress? Have you put on the whole armour of God? Have you sworn to fight for your Prince and your country, giving no quarters to his foes? Have you looked at yourself thus accoutred and pledged, in the glass of his word, and almost felt proud of your distinction and honour? Is it your daily object to please him who hath called you to be a soldier? If so, I hail you as a fellow-soldier. I rejoice in your happiness, and honour. Keep your clothing clean, and you armour bright. Be always ready for marching orders. Never envy any creature in God's dominions. Yours is an honourable distinction, you were chosen to it, you may well rejoice in it. You belong to "the sacramental host of God's elect." Your regiment is commanded by the King's Son. Your post may be one of danger, but the more danger now, the more honour by and bye. Every scar you receive in the conflict here, will be to your credit when the war is ended. No scars are dishonourable except scars in the back, none are so honourable as those on the face. Face the foe. Keep the field. Strive for the mastery. Use your sword. Hold fast your shield. Persevere in the conflict until the sound of the trumpet informs you that the warfare is ended, and then—with all your brave companions in arms—then,

> March up the heavenly street,
> And ground your arms at Jesu's feet.

THE GOOD SOLDIER'S PROSPECT

There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.
2 TIMOTHY iv. 8.

THE soldiers of Christ have every thing to stimulate and encourage them. Their present position is honourable, their future prospects are glorious. Their Captain will try them, but never trifle with them. Suffer they may, surrender they should not. They are more than a match for all their foes, for never was one left dead on the field. Their lives are insured, and their crown is prepared. This being the case they ought to be courageous, confident, and constantly at their post. Christian soldier, look up to your Captain for supplies, and look forward to the glory that awaits you for encouragement in every conflict. The war will soon be over. Your discharge will soon be signed and sent you. Home is even now in view. But how different your end to your beginning! Think of what you were before you enlisted—what you were when a raw recruit—what you have often been through doubts, fears, and misgivings—and then at what you will be. What a contrast! How striking! How surprising!

A crown is laid up for you. Not a crown of bay, or laurel, or myrtle, but a diadem. A diadem of glory. More durable than gold, more

costly than any earthy monarch's crown. Gold, pearls, or precious stones, are not to be compared to it. Its gems will sparkle brighter that the stars on a winter's evening, as a whole, it will shine brighter than the sun on a summer's noon. It is a crown of glory, a most glorious crown. Not merited by your labours or sufferings in the Lord's service, but graciously promised, and gratuitously bestowed. Promised by your glorious Leader, preserved most carefully in the palace of the Most High, to be presented to every faithful soldier at the final and grand review. Yes, it will be placed on your brow by his hands, who won you to his service, led you to the field, made you victorious, and will rejoice in your honour and happiness for ever. It will be worn before God's high throne, before the angelic hosts, among God's saints for ever. What thrilling joy, what extatic pleasure, what inconceivable delight, will you realize when you first feel it rest on your brows! What a look will your Saviour give you, when you lift up your head that he may place it on you, and your eye meets his in his Father's presence! Surely, surely we ought to be fired with love, filled with zeal, and prepared for every conflict however arduous by such a prospect.

But shall *I* be crowned? Brother soldier, will you? Yes, if we are indeed loyal soldiers. If we are engaged in the holy war. If we are attached to Immanuel and his cause. And the crowns we shall wear, will remind us of the con-

flicts we have endured below—of the foes we have conquered on earth—of the desires kindled and cherished while engaged in the campaign, and of the faithfulness of our king to the promises he made. We shall see that not one thing hath failed. We shall realize that he has done for us exceeding and abundantly above all that we asked of him, or thought that he would give. The promised land will be far above our expectations. The glory to be revealed will far exceed our most enlarged desires. The weight of glory will transcend our most comprehensive thoughts. Grace, free grace will shine most gloriously on that day. The atonement of Jesus, as the procuring cause of all our blessedness, will be radient with glory then. The songs of the enraptured company will be divinely sweet. O how our blessed Saviour's heart will dance for joy! How his eyes will sparkle with delight! His mighty spirit will realize full satisfaction, to see his whole host collected, arranged, and glorified before him. Not *one* missing. All that the Father gave him, *there*. All for whom he offered up himself as a sacrifice, *there*. All to whom he sent the Comforter, *there*. All who enlisted under his banner and were sworn into his army, *there*. Those who were once wounded, weeping, and lagging behind the regiment, *there*. His great enemy completely defeated. His cause honourably carried. His troops passing again under the hand of him that telleth them. Blessed be God for a *certain salvation!* A salvation,

secured by the oath of the Father, the blood of the Son, and the veracity of the Holy Spirit. A salvation, secured by all the attributes of God's nature, the honours of the divine throne, and the stipulations of the covenant of grace. Glorious salvation, in which every poor, maimed, weather beaten, discouraged soldier of the cross shall share!

But the crown we shall wear is called "a crown of righteousness:" a righteous crown. A crown to which we have a right. A right, founded in God's most free, sovereign, and glorious grace. A right, revealed in Christ's most glorious, gracious, and everlasting gospel. A right, secured by the most simple, magnificent, and precious promises. A crown, which will eternally prove that God his faithful to his Son, his soldiers, and his word. A crown that will show that God "is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." The right crown will be on the right head. It will just fit. It will sit easy. It will look graceful. It will never be taken off, except when each one takes it off himself, to cast it at the feet of his beloved Lord. It is a crown of life—a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Reader, what a prospect is this? How bright, how glowing, how enchanting! Is it *your* prospect? Is there a crown laid up for *you?* Are *you* looking forward, and longing for the day when it shall be placed on your head, and when you shall wear it to the honour of free grace for ever? Are *you*

indeed a soldier of Christ? Can you look back and remember when the thought first came into your head to enlist into his army, the exercise of soul you had before you came to the final decision? The feelings with which you put forth your hand to receive the King's coin? The thrill which passed through your heart when you realized, I am enlisted—I am a soldier—I cannot go back? Do you remember how you felt when you went to be sworn in, and the solemnity which filled you mind, when as with the heart-searching eye of God resting upon you, you pledged your word to be the Lord's, for life—for ever? Do you remember the exercises of your spirit when taken into the stripping room, and how you felt as your rags were removed from you, until the last, your once fondly loved self-righteousness was gone? Do you remember the sensations you experienced when the glorious blood-red regimentals were put upon you? How nicely they fitted, how you held up your head; how erect you walked, how singularly peaceful and happy you felt? Were they not happy hours when all was thus new, the sun shone bright, the south wind blew softly, the birds sung sweetly, our comrades all spoke cheerfully, and it was as much like heaven as any thing on earth can be? The pocket was filled with the bounty money, the eye was flashing with delight in the prospect of glory, the heart was swelling with satisfaction, and we forgot our own family and our father's house. No life appeared like the life of a soldier. No

being appeared so glorious as our Captain. No company could equal our troops. The banners, the arms, the armour, the discipline, the officers, all appeared to be as nearly perfect as they could be. We knew nothing of the battle field, the confused noise, the groans of the wounded, or the garments rolled in blood, then. But, reader, do you know any thing of these things now? Remember, no cross, no crown. No conflict, no conquest. The crown is only for overcomers. We cannot overcome unless we come into contact, unless we strive, unless we throw and disable our foe. Are you fairly enlisted? Are you wearing the King's regimentals? Are you in one of the King's regiments? Do you understand the true military discipline? Have you ever taken the field? Did you ever return from the conflict like David, with the head of some Goliath in your hand? Do you prefer a soldier's life with all its toils, privations, sufferings, and dangers to all others? These are searching questions, I beseech you to lay them to heart. Let them be carefully considered and honestly answered.

Brother soldier, you who have for some time served the Lord Christ, I greet you in his most holy name. I give you joy, and rejoice in your honourable connexion. Suffer the word of exhortation, your General sends it, I give it in his own words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Be faithful to your engagements, your oath, and your Sovereign

Lord. Never crouch to his foes. Never compromise in his cause. Never put off any part of your armour. Never neglect any of your orders. Walk erect and show a manly bearing. Use your sword daily and keep it bright. Watch your foes closely for they are crafty, cunning, and determined. Let nothing daunt or discourage you. Go straight forward and cut through all and every thing that opposes. Keep your ears open to your Commander's voice, and your eye fixed on the crown of glory in his hand. He will stand by you. He will fight for you. He will conquer through you. Soon, very soon, you will say, if you cannot just now, "I am a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through him that loved me." And when we meet on the plains of the promised land, when we are waiting for the conclusion of the war that the whole host may be crowned together, we will talk of our perils and dangers, of our conflicts and conquests, of the past and the present, and above all of the love, care, kindness, faithfulness, forbearance, and grace of our glorious King, and bless his holy name for ever and ever. Then, O with what rapture! we will sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

THREE BAD COMPANIONS.

We are all of us, at times, thrown into company which we do not like; and when so, the best thing we can do is to get out of it as quickly as possible. But sometimes we find that this is more easily said than done. I have seen some aged people pestered with very bad companions, and they could not get rid of them if they would; and that the young may beware of them, I will point them out. There is,—

Poverty. This is often brought on by imprudence, and want of economy. When work was good, and health was strong, no provision was made for a rainy day; by and bye, trade failed, strength departed, and age came on, and then appears the pitiable object, *a poor old man*. We shall want many little comforts in age, which we can very well do without now; therefore, if God has given us the opportunity, let us lay by a little for old age. It is hard to beg when the head is gray, to be frowned upon by the wealthy, or be obliged to go into "The Union;" these things may be avoided by many, if they would shun the alehouse, and live frugally. Reader, if you are young, make up your mind, that if poverty should be your companion when you are old, you will be able to say, "This was not brought on by intemperance, self-indulgence, or forgetfulness of the future, but by the wise

providence of God." Then you will have a source of comfort, which many old people have deprived themselves of. There is next,—

PAIN. The pains of age often spring from the follies, sins, and recklessness of youth. Pain cannot always be prevented, but very much is brought on by ourselves. Many old people are full of Rheumatic and other pains, the effects of their carelessness, rashness, and wickedness in youth. A poor old man full of pain is to be pitied; and yet if we knew the origin of many of his pains, we should be obliged to say that he is to be blamed. Friends, if you would not have pain for a companion when you are old, live frugally, take exercise in the open air, and avoid as much as possible sudden exposures to change of temperature. Then there is also,—

PROCRASTINATION. This has been called "*the thief of time*;" as, therefore, it would steal one of your most precious jewels, beware of it. A poor old man without religion, *what an object!* A poor old man without Christ, *what a sinner!* He has been warned of delay. He has been invited to Christ. He has been urged to decide for God. He has been exhorted to enter in at the strait gate. But he has put these things from him. He has spent his time and talents entirely about temporal things; and now he needs religion to comfort him, he has none; now he needs a Saviour to take him to heaven, he is without one. His heart is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and though we know that

while there is life there is hope, it seems as if his day was past, as if God had said, "*let him alone.*" Poor old man, he is full of pain, destitute of many earthly comforts which he might have secured, and what is worse, infinitely worse, he is without any holy peace at present, or good hope for the future!

Dear reader, endeavour to secure deliverance from these evils. You may live to be old, therefore close in with Christ at once. Procrastination you can avoid, much pain perhaps you may prevent, and shivering poverty you may keep outside the door. Do so, if possible; at least, try; and if you fail, you will have comfortable reflections, and if Christ is yours, the hope of glory will cheer you to the end.

The fountain in its source,
  No drought of summer fears;
The farther it pursues its course,
  The nobler it appears.

But shallow cisterns yield
  A scanty, short supply;
The morning sees them amply filled,
  At evening they are dry.

The cisterns I forsake,
  O Fount of bliss, for thee;
My thirst with living waters slake,
  And drink eternity.

WESLEY'S MOTTO.

"ALL AT IT, AND ALWAYS AT IT." This was what Wesley endeavoured to impress upon all his followers, and this is what we should like to see impressed upon the mind of every member, of every Christian church. We have much to do, and we have little time to do it in. We had need therefore be up and at it. If ignorance is to be chased away, if knowledge is to be circulated, if souls are to be saved, if children are to be taught, if churches are to be enlarged, if villages, towns, and cities are to be evangelized, we had need be all at it, and always at it. There is plenty for every one to do, there is more than we shall all accomplish, much will be left undone, as it has been until the present day, except we all go at it, and are always at it. Christians cannot be happy, churches will not prosper, Jesus will not have his right, God will not be glorified as he should be, except we are all at it, and always at it. This is just what the times call for, what the Gospel inculcates, what Satan dreads, what the carnal world dislikes, what is absolutely necessary to meet the claims made upon the church, therefore let us be "*all at it, and always at it.*"

Let every one have his own plot to cultivate, let every one undertake that part of the work for which he is most adapted, and let us all per-

severe in that which we commence. How many there are who profess Christ, who are doing nothing. How many may do just as much again as they do. Is it surprising that the church is low, that Popery spreads, that ignorance prevails, that congregations are thin, that little is accomplished, that ministers are dispirited, and old Christians who are going home sigh? Nay, it is not at all surprising, the wonder is that things are not worse. Professors forget their vocation, believers lose sight of their proper business, and while this is the case error will spread, sinners will be hardened, Satan will triumph, and the church must droop. Self-denial is rarely practised, the flesh is indulged, the world is loved, the visible is preferred to the invisible, and the present to the future. There must be a change, or the time will soon come, when judgment will begin at the house of God. The day appears to be going away, and the shadows of evening to be stretched out, let us therefore awake to righteousness, and spread the knowledge of God. Let us all go at it, and let us be always at it, until the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Until there shall be no need for every one to say to his neighbour, and to his brother, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least unto the greatest. Until the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh see it together, as the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. Or, until we hear the Master's

voice calling unto us and saying, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord." But if we neglect duty, despise warning, love ease, court pleasure, hunt for honour, hide our Lord's money, or settle down upon our lees, we shall by and bye see the day, when we shall wish we had all been at it, and always at it.

Jesus, let all thy people shine
Illustrious as the sun,
And bright with borrowed rays divine
Their glorious circuit run,
Beyond the reach of mortals, spread
Their light where'er they go,
And heavenly influences shed
On all the world below.

As giants may they run their race,
Exulting in their might,
As burning luminaries chase
The gloom of horrid night,
As the great Sun of righteousness
Their healing wings display;
And let their lustre still increase
Unto the perfect day.

Such honour all thy saints receive
Who thee sincerely love;
Dispensers of thy gifts we live,
And general blessings prove;
And when our useful course is run
Enjoy the kingdom given,
Bright as the uncreated sun
In the eternal heaven.

LOVE TO ORDINANCES.

A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. PSALM lxxxiv. 10.

NONE know the value of the ordinances of the gospel, but those who are deprived of them. But they are always highly esteemed by every truly spiritual person, and in proportion as the mind is spiritual will ordinances be prized. They will not be put in the place of Christ, or made a substitute for fellowship with God; but they will be valued as means of grace, as the meeting places between God and the soul. The healthy man is naturally hungry at meal time, and seeks the food provided and placed on the table for him; so the healthy Christian, hungers for the bread of life, and goes to the ordinances with appetite to feed on the Lord Jesus Christ. The child who loves his parent, and enjoys his company, will be sure to remember the time fixed for meeting with that parent; so the child of God when influenced by love to God, will be sure to go where God has appointed to meet him, and hold communion with him. When we see Christians absenting themselves from the meetings of the Lord's people, or habitually coming late to those meetings, we may be sure that the soul is not in a healthy state.

"Lord," said David, "I have loved the habi-

tation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." And how did he manifest his love? By regular and early attendance when he could, and by ardently longing to do so when he could not. "A day in thy courts," said he, "is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." And again, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Once more, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." Now reader, do these portions express the feelings of your soul? Do you go up to the Lord's house as to the place which of all others you love most? Does your regular and early attendance, both on Lord's days, and on the week day evening services say, "I love the Lord's ordinances, and prize them above gold?" Or, does the irregularity of your attendance, and your late appearance among the saints say, "These ordinances are not of much account, we should be almost as well without them as with them?" Remember, they were instituted by an infinitely wise, and infinitely gracious God. He saw they were necessary for us, and in his love he ordained them to benefit and bless us. To neglect them, is to insult him. To despise them,

is to grieve him. To allow any trifle to keep us from meeting him in his house, is to grieve his love and wound his tender heart. He says, "Let us meet together in my house." The time is fixed, the hour arrives, and he is present; but we either neglect altogether, or come long after the hour appointed. If this is not insulting him, is it not very much like it? If we had made an appointment with any one, and were thus kept waiting, and we knew that it was only some trifling matter that was allowed to be the occasion, how should we feel? Should we act so towards an earthly friend? Should we thus treat our earthly sovereign? Indeed we should not. Can we then justify our conduct toward the King of kings, and Lord of lords? I should think not. And yet how many, how very many professors act thus. Many church members, who *could* if their hearts were set upon it, never enter the house of prayer except on the Lord's day, and sometimes only once then. They never meet with the saints for prayer, or to attend to the business of the church. They never come out to hear a sermon on the week day evening. Is it any wonder if their souls are lean from day to day? Is it any wonder, if they become cold, carnal, and worldly? Are we surprised that they have no relish for savoury, experimental conversation? Indeed we are not surprised, but we should be surprised if they had. Such cannot say, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee."

Reader, how is it with you? The present state of things in God's church, calls upon every one to examine himself, and to ask, is it any thing in me, or in my conduct that has grieved the Holy Spirit, and caused him to withhold his influences and his blessing? How is it then with you? Do you prize the ordinances as you ought? Do you walk in them, as Zacharias and Elisabeth of old did, "blameless?" Are you regularly in your place in the "house of prayer?" Are you always in your place before the service commences? Or, if you are not, do you feel grieved, and examine whether the circumstances which made you late, were such as would justify you in being so? How can you expect God to meet you, to make the ordinances a blessing to you, if you do not honour him by valuing his institutions, and keeping your appointments with him? Is it any matter of surprise, that many professors find the ordinances barren, and the means of grace powerless and dry? Rather would it not be surprising if they did not? Can they expect the Lord to bless them in any great measure? Has he not said, "Them that honour me I will honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed?" Would this be true, if, while they dishonoured him by their neglect or slighting of his ordinances, he should bless them to any great extent? I fear that unbelief is very strong in the hearts of many who little suspect it. They do not believe that God will do as he has said, or they never could act as they do. It

is well for us, that he is "slow to anger," "plenteous in mercy," "longsuffering," and "abundant in goodness and truth." O that he would teach us the value of his ordinances, without depriving us of them; or rendering us incapable of attending to them! The time is coming when we shall look upon these things differently to what we do at present, may it be mercy and not judgement that shall produce the change. The Lord is now warning us that he may not strike us, his words to many of us are, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth." "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." "Remember therefore from whence thou hast fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Lord of hosts, how lovely fair,
E'en on earth thy temples are!
Here thy waiting people see
Much of heaven and much of thee.

From thy gracious presence flows
Bliss that softens all our woes;
While thy Spirit's holy fire
Warms our hearts with pure desire.

Here we supplicate thy throne,
Here thou mak'st thy glories known;
Here we learn thy righteous ways,
Taste thy love, and sing thy praise.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

They that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. PSALM ix. 10.

THE book of Psalms is prized by every real believer, because it contains such a clear, full, and refreshing account of the Christian's experience. Here the footsteps of the flock may be plainly traced out. Here the spiritual pilgrim may find a companion to the celestial city, let him be in what part of the road he may. Here the tried saint will find one who can sympathize with him in all his trials, and discover that no temptation hath taken him but such as is common to man We naturally turn to this book in dark days, and expect to find refreshment and solace in it in trying times. It is like that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. It is like Israel's pillar-cloud, which gives light by night, and affords a refreshing shade by day. It is like the manna that fell for forty years in the desert, it suits every believer let his age, experience, taste, or acquirements be what they may. Blessed book, it has been a source of comfort to the Lord's people in every age! Most blessed Spirit, who indited, preserved, and presented this precious volume to us, to thy name be eternal praise.

Let us look at the ground of a believer's confidence in God. The divine name. This includes the nature and perfections of God, but has especial reference to the character He has acquired among men. He has a name for power. Power to which all things are possible, all things are easy. Power over all minds, power over all matter. Power engaged for his people's safety, power employed to do them good. Power that works within them, and power that rules all around them. He has a name for wisdom. Wisdom which baffles the crafty designs of their foes, and overrules all things for their real advantage. Wisdom which is infinite in its nature, and constantly employed for their welfare. Wisdom which can extricate them from every difficulty, and make even the counsels of their foes subserve their best interests. He has a name for grace. Grace which acts freely, sovereignly, and always effectually. Grace which drew the plan of their salvation, arranged all the agencies necessary, and infallibly secures the end it has in view. Grace which sympathizes with the unworthy, works for the ill-deserving, and saves the basest of mankind. Grace which can always find a motive in itself, and which never turns a deaf ear to the poor and miserable of mankind. He has a name for sympathy. His soul was grieved for the afflictions of backsliding Israel. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore

them, and carried them all the days of old. Here is sympathy exquisitely tender. The sympathy of God. The sympathy which he continually exercises towards his beloved people, through Jesus his beloved Son. Sweet thought this, God takes my misery to heart. My sufferings affect his tender, loving nature. Israel's groans in Egypt, brought him down into the bush at Horeb: and the groans of many an afflicted saint, have brought him down into the chamber of affliction and sorrow. He has a name for faithfulness. He is the faithful God. He keepeth covenant and mercy unto a thousand generations. He never failed one of his people in distress, or violated one promise of his word. Therefore, the Apostle could so confidently say, "Faithful is he that hath promised, who also will do it." Does he afflict us? It is in faithfulness. Does he deliver us? It is in the performance of his faithful word. He is immutable, and immutability is the characteristic of all his perfections, and is stamped on every letter of his name. He is in one mind and who can turn him? What right-minded person would wish to do so? God's name then includes his power, wisdom, grace, sympathy, faithfulness, and immutability; and these combined, form the ground of our confidence in him.

But his name must be known, before he can be trusted. I can trust an unseen person, but I cannot trust an unknown one. The knowledge of God, is essential to confidence in God. How is he then made known? No one can re-

veal him to us so as to affect our hearts, control our wills, and bring our souls to exercise confidence in him but the Holy Spirit. He is the great Manifester of God to the soul of man. We must be taught of God, before we can really know God. But the knowledge of the divine name is acquired partly by observation. The heavens declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Providence is constantly bringing out some feature of the divine character, or copying some letter of the divine name. And he that watches God's hand, carefully observes God's works, and notes the method which God adopts in dealing with man, will get some knowledge of God's name. But his name is only fully revealed in his own word. There it is fully, clearly and impressively proclaimed. There it is illustrated and exhibited in the most winning and affecting manner. In the history of the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Church of God, we read God's name. In the types, figures, and shadows of the ceremonial law, we see God's name as in pictures framed and glazed. But in the Gospel, it stands out in bold relief. Every letter has its place, is distinctly marked, and may be read by the simplest child in God's family. Here mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other. Here God is correctly revealed, plainly manifested, and fully set forth, in the person, work, sacrifice, righteousness, grace, and triumphs of his beloved Son. "Here his whole name appears

complete." But the most impressive knowledge of God's name is derived from experience, by which the believer puts God's truth to the test, and proves its worth, value, dignity, and suitability. In troubles and trials his power supports, sustains, and delivers. In difficulties and dangers, his wisdom makes a way for our escape, and brings us safely through. Under guilt, darkness, and doubts, his grace pardons, enlightens, and cheers us. In sufferings and sorrows he sympathizes with us, comforts, and sanctifies our pains. When friends forsake, the world frowns, and every fond relative is removed, his faithfulness to his word, relationship, and love, enables us to persevere in our way with courage, if not with comfort. And while every thing within and without, in the world and in the Church is found to change and fail us, his immutability is like a rock beneath our feet, a rainbow over our heads, or a strong tower into which we may run and find safety. Thus we prove to our own satisfaction that our God is powerful, wise, gracious, sympathetic, faithful, and immutably the same. Thus we come to a soul-saving knowledge of the divine name, and consequently put our trust in him.

Let us now consider the confidence which the believer exercises in his God. He trusts in him. This he is warranted to do, as it is written, "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him, God is a refuge for us." This he may always do, as said the Prophet,

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." He will have to pass through dark days, when there will be no bright prospects to cheer him, no sweet retrospects to animate him; but all will be dark within and without, before and behind, above and around him. This is the time to trust. This is the time he must trust or fail. This is the time when he should calmly, quietly, and confidently trust. Hence the Lord has said, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Christian, art thou in the dark? Is all dark in providence without? Is all dark in grace within? Do not yield to Satan, listen to unbelief, or give way to fear, but trust in the Lord. He loves you still. He is working for you now. He will appear for you soon. He will turn the shadow of death into morning. He will bring you forth to the light. Hold fast your confidence in his faithful word. Rest on his unchangeable promise. Wait for his return to bless you with the light of his countenance and cheering smile. Darkness may endure for the night, but joy will come in the morning. "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." He will experience trying times, for every grace must be tried. The seasons will change. It will not be always bright summer, or fruitful autumn. There will be the cold, bleak, cheerless winter. Every grace

almost will appear to wither. Every prospect will change. Friends will keep in doors. Fear will arise and work in the heart. The hand of the Lord will appear to go out against him. Every thing he touches will chill or freeze him. Every place will be cold and cheerless, even the closet and the house of prayer. Trials will come in troops from every quarter. Temptations will press him sore. Afflictions will crowd his path. Troubles will scowl upon him, and surround him like a multitude. What can he do then? Do, trust in the name of the Lord. He hath delivered, he can deliver, he will deliver. Now is the time to attend to the admonition, "Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." He will bring to pass his own merciful purpose, his own precious promise, his own glorious design. Trust then and be not afraid, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Call upon him in this day of severe trouble, he will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify him. Wait on the Lord, be of courage, he shall strengthen thy heart, wait, I say, on the Lord. We must die. The day of death is fast approaching. We must soon depart. All the circumstances connected with death will be new to us. The feeling of death at work on the physical frame. The soul's realizations of the invisible world. The last farewell to friends, relatives, and beloved companions. The dying struggle, the soul's flight. The ascent to the invisible world. All this will be new. Much of

it is calculated to awaken fears. The whole of it will unite to put our principles to the test. What shall we do when death takes his place by our pillow and refuses to quit it, when we feel that we must depart, and as far as creatures are concerned, must go alone? When heart and flesh is failing us, our eyes closing upon all earthly objects, and our ears to all terrestrial sounds? Do, then we should exercise confidence in God. His power is sufficient to sustain us. His wisdom will guide and direct us. His grace will triumph in our perfect and endless salvation. His sympathy will be our solace and cheer us. He will be found faithful, as he has ever been in every previous trouble, conflict, and trial. He will prove himself the same loving Father, the same kind, forgiving God, the same merciful and gracious Saviour, as he had done in every instance before: for he is without variableness or the shadow of a turning. O for strong faith in the last struggle! O for living confidence in God in the dying hour! O for that knowledge of the Lord's name *now*, which will enable me to put my trust in him *then!*

They who experimentally know the Lord's name will look to him for help whenever they need it. They will not look to creatures, or like Israel of old, go down to Egypt for help. They will not trust in their own resources, or supposed abilities, but they will look unto the Lord. The eye will be directed to his throne. The heart will rest on his word. The voice will ascend to

his ear. They know that he *can* help them, for he is omnipotent. They know that he is pledged to help them, for his promise runs, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, *I will help thee;* yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." They trust that he will help them, for they know that he abideth faithful, *he cannot deny himself.* Precious assurance this! No, he cannot, it is utterly, eternally impossible! "*He cannot deny himself.*" Heaven and earth may pass away, but his word shall not pass away. Man may lie, it is impossible for God to do so. Creatures may change, the Creator changes not. Well then, may we confidently look to him for help in every trouble, help against every foe, help out of every difficulty, help every step of the way to heaven, and help until we stand perfect before his throne for ever. They will expect him to appear for them, as he has ever done for the saints who have gone before them. In the mount the Lord shall be seen. In difficulty, danger, and death, his name shall be gloriously illustrated. With our beloved Lord, when hanging on the cross, we may look up and say, "Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee and were delivered; they trusted in thee and were not confounded." Or with an old writer we may exclaim, "Look unto the generations of old, did ever any trust in the Lord and were confounded." The Lord may

delay to appear for a time, but if we really trust in him, if we steadily look to him, if we expect deliverance from him, he will appear to our joy and all our foes shall be ashamed. Let us therefore seek a more thorough, spiritual, experimental knowledge of the Lord's name; that so we may steadily, quietly, and constantly, put our trust in him.

But let us just glance at the support of the Christian's confidence, "*For thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*" Every believer is included among those that seek God. Grace sets us seeking at first, and keeps us seeking until the end. For though we find the Lord, and enjoy his pardoning love, refreshing smiles, and soul-satisfying favour; we have frequent occasion to seek *to* him, and to seek *for* him again. All who are under divine teaching seek to the Lord as he has encouraged them to do by the apostle when he said, "Come boldly unto a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." They seek to him as "the God of all comfort," that he would comfort them in all their tribulations, and make them happy in his own love. They frequently feel that none can comfort them but God, and they have, at times, no one to apply to for comfort but God. They seek to him also for supply, for they need much and need often. He has all they need, he has invited them to come to him for all they want, and has promised to supply all their need according to his riches in glory

by Jesus Christ. They therefore seek to the Lord, rather than to creatures; or if they go to the creature, it is only in subordination to him. The seeking soul is precious in the Lord's sight. The seeking soul is ever welcome at his throne. The seeking soul is sure to awaken his sympathy. The seeking soul is sure to obtain his blessing. The grace to seek he gives, the blessing sought he has provided and promised, the sense of need he imparts, the feeling that urges them to go to his throne he produces, and every seeking soul is ultimately supplied by his bounty.

A seeking soul was never forsaken of God. Such a fact cannot be found in all history. Such a circumstance never occurred in all time. He has tried them, and tried them very severely, but he never forsook one of them. He may try them by delays, as he did Abraham; by the oppression of men, as he did the Israelites in Egypt; by a fiery furnace, as he did the three Jews in Babylon; but forsake them he never will, he never can. He tried Joseph, and tried him long, and the iron entered into his soul, but even in prison it is said, "The Lord was with Joseph." "The word of the Lord tried him," but at length, "The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators wisdom." He tried Daniel, and tried him very sorely, so that his enemies appeared to prevail against him; a cruel sentence was passed

upon him, and that sentence was executed, but we read, "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, *because he believed on his God.*" There never was such a thing, as a forsaken saint; or, which is the same thing, the Lord never did forsake them that seek him. Satan may whisper, "*He will.*" But our Lord who never libelled any one said, "*He is a liar, and the father of it.*" Nature may say, "*He has.*" But nature will be found to have fallen into a mistake. He never loves us more, than when he *appears* to forsake us. He never cares for us more, than when he seems to stand afar off. If he allow men to ride over our heads, he will secretly give us inward strength, if he bring us through the fire, he will render us unconsumable; if he bring us through the water, he will impart a principle of buoyancy so that we shall not sink, and to prove to demonstration that he has not forsaken us, he will bring "us out into a wealthy place." Now, if the Lord has never forsaken them that seek him, and if he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, what encouragement have all that know his name to put their trust in him.

But to conclude, every one that really knows the Lord's name, trusts in him. Do *you?* Have you any confidence in God? Can you trust his power in your weakness, his wisdom in your perplexity, his grace under a deep sense of your unworthiness, his sympathy when in pain and suffering, his faithfulness when all around appear

faithless, and his immutability amidst all the changes you witness, or pass through? If so, happy are you, if not, seek grace that you may do so. Every one that trusts in the Lord, seeks him. Do *you?* Do you seek him daily, heartily, perseveringly? Do you seek to know him better, to love him more, to enjoy his grace, to do his will, and that you may honour his holy and ever-blessed name? Every one that seeks the Lord, finds him. Have *you* found him? Is he your Father, whom you consult? Your Saviour, in whom you confide? Your companion, with whom you walk? Your portion, on whom you live? Your centre, to which you constantly tend? Every one that finds the Lord, proves him to be faithful. Have *you?* Has he in your experience proved himself to be faithful to his word? Have you taken it to his throne, trusted it in your trials, and has he made it good? If so, you have every encouragement to go on exercising confidence in him. His word is true. His grace is infinite. His mercy is everlasting. His truth endureth throughout all generations. He is a buckler to all those that trust in him. May the Lord give us such a knowledge of his name, as will inspire us with undying confidence in his love, that so we may live happily, work cheerfully, walk steadily, watch hopefully, wait patiently, suffer joyfully, fight manfully, and die triumphantly. Amen.

POVERTY.

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world? JAMES ii. 5.

MOST people dread poverty, and yet it is not the worst thing that can happen to us. "A poor man is better than a liar." Honest poverty is far better than wealth gotten by deceit, fraud, or oppression. Riches are often a greater temptation than destitution. Wealth often draws from God, while poverty drives us to him. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For *the love of money is the root of all evil:* which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows: O man of God, flee these things." Thus wrote the Apostle to professors in his day, and his admonition is as necessary now as ever. Few can be trusted with wealth without injuring them. It exercises such a powerful influence, it puts such energy into our lusts and passions, and it exposes us to such violent temptations; that, except special grace be given us, we are sure to be led astray. Many who have wealth must be stripped of it, if they are to be made holy, useful, or happy; and many who long for it, must be kept without it, if they are to be pre-

served from Satan and sin. Agur's prayer was as wise as it was devout, "Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die; remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty now riches: feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

The Lord's people have generally been poor. They were chosen *to be* poor, not because *they were* poor. They were chosen to be the Lord's special people, a people peculiarly his own. They were chosen in Christ, "who is the head of his body the church." They were chosen of mere grace, without any thing in them to induce the Lord to choose them. They were chosen before the foundation of the world. Election is one of the first acts of God, of which we have any account given us in his most holy word. This act of God lies at the root of our salvation. It is the spring from which proceeds all our graces, and all our usefulness. It was the sovereign act of a sovereign God. It was the exercise of his unquestionable right, for his people's good and his own glory. It was sovereignty taking the side of mercy, and thus securing the salvation of millions of immortal souls who must otherwise have perished. The Lord chose whom he would, and chose them because he would. He chose them to be holy. He chose them to be saved through sanctification of the Spirit, and

belief of the truth. His choice is necessarily very different to man's. "For his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; but as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." Men would have chosen the rich, the great, the noble, the learned, the amiable, and the wise, but God hath chosen the poor. This, men would account foolish, but hear the Apostle Paul, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men: for ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." How wonderful is this, and yet how wise. How humbling to human pride, and yet how calculated to secure all the glory to God.

"God hath chosen the poor of this world," not all the poor, but the generality of his people have been, and are still poor. Not that there is anything spiritual in poverty, or peculiarly pleasing to God in it, but grace thrives best in this soil. God appointed his people to be poor, because he saw it would be best for them, it would bring out the natural principles of sinners around them,

and greatly glorify him. The objects of God's choice, men generally despise. They court the rich, but they neglect the poor. They fish for the great, but they disregard the weak. They make much of the noble, but they think little of the foolish things which God hath chosen. There is too much of this carnal partiality among even professors of religion. The man with the gold ring and goodly apparel, is still made too much of; and the poor man in vile raiment, too little. But God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Reader, are you poor? is your situation in life mean? do the great and noble of this world despise you? care not for it. See to it that your heart is right with God. Make your calling and election sure. Prove your election of God, by your holiness and consecration to God. Let not your heart be troubled about temporal things, but seek to have God dwelling in you, and to dwell yourself in God. Seek to walk with God, to be conformed to the will of God, to be employed in the service of God, and to be used to the glory of God. The Most High is *the poor man's God.* The Bible is the poor man's book. The promises are the poor man's portion. The bosom of Jesus is the poor man's resting place. Heaven is the poor man's home. Poverty cannot prevent happiness, because it cannot separate from God, keep us from the mercy seat, or deprive us of our title to everlasting life. God has an especial regard for the godly poor, hence

he says, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye built unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hands made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; *but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit*, and trembleth at my word." In times of calamity, affliction, and sorrow, there are special comforts in store for the godly poor, as it is written, "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and *the poor among men* shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." Let us not then fear poverty. Let us not unduly value wealth. But let us seek first, to possess and promote the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and expect all temporal things that are necessary to be added unto us. We have the word of our beloved Lord, as a solemn pledge that it shall; and he will not break his word, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth. To be under the blessing of God is to be really rich, for "the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." To be righteous before God is to be truly safe, for "riches profit not in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivereth from death." To be poor in spirit, as well as poor in circumstances, is to possess an unquestionable title to everlasting life; hence the Lord Jesus said, "Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven." Heaven with all its glories, eternity with all its blessings, and God with all his wealth

is the portion of the poor, but godly man; for "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him." Rejoice then and be exceeding glad, for "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." But if your trials press so sore that you cannot just now rejoice, "Be patient, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh;" and when he comes "the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Poverty is only for time, plenty will be your portion to all eternity.

Father, I want a thankful heart,
I want to taste how good thou art;
To plunge me in thy mercy's sea,
And comprehend thy love to me;
The length, and depth, and breadth, and
height,
Of love divinely infinite.

Jesus, my great High Priest above,
My Friend before the throne of love;
If now for me prevails thy prayer,
If now I find thee pleading there,
Hear, and my weak petitions join,
Almighty Advocate, to thine.

O Sovereign Love, to thee I cry,
Give me thyself, or else I die!
Save me from death, from hell set free;
Death, hell, are but the want of thee!
My life, my crown, my heaven, thou art,
O may I find thee in my heart!

sition and illustration of, 1 Cor. xiii. One of the great wants of the Church is this love. This would affect all around her, attract many to her, and bring down a powerful blessing upon her. This tender love will not be much realized "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." Until then, there will not be much *burning zeal*. Zeal, enlightened by truth. Zeal, consecrated to God. Zeal, to spread God's word, to silence God's foes, to extend God's cause, and to bring great glory to God's name. Zeal, which sympathizes with human woe, aims at the soul's welfare, and endeavours to bring great honour to the Saviour's work. Zeal, which not only prays but gives, not only gives but works, not only works but suffers for God's cause. Which considers nothing too arduous to undertake, nothing too costly to sacrifice, nothing too low to stoop to, if souls may but be saved, the Church benefited, and the Saviour honoured. Zeal, which is the visible life of the Church, and proves that she is like Christ, who said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;" that she is one with Christ, who "put on zeal as a cloak." Until then, there will not be much *prevailing prayer*. Prayer that comes up from the bottom of men's hearts, and sinks into God's heart. Prayer that is nerved by faith, fired with love, and will take no denial. Prayer, that seeks to bring down the power and presence of God into the Church, that it may appear to be his living temple, his home and dwelling place. Prayer, that rests on the finished

work of Christ, that pleads his precious name, asks for all God has promised, that asks, seeks, knocks, until the full answer comes down. Prayer, that engages the whole soul, rouses all that hears it, and will give the Lord no rest until he makes his Church a praise and a glory. Prayer, that has power with God, and, gives the person praying, power with man. This is the prayer the Church needs. This is the prayer to which promises are made. This is the prayer that precedes a powerful revival of religion. *O that the Lord would pour out this spirit of prayer upon every one of us immediately!* Until then, there will be no *mighty effort*. Occasional, feeble, or spasmodic efforts there may be. But united, energetic, well directed, well sustained, persevering, and successful efforts there will not be. Human power is not enough, we want divine. The agency of man is not sufficient, we want the putting forth of the energy of God in man, and through man. If the Holy Spirit were but poured out upon us from on high, we should soon excite attention, admiration, and surprise; we should soon hear the wondering exclamation, "Who is this, that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners!" Amalek would soon be discomfited, and the inhabitants of Canaan would melt away; and the Church would come up from "the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchants." Until then, there will be no

great success. Conversions now and then will take place. Saints will occasionally rejoice. But there will be no great work. There can be no Pentecost without the down coming of the Holy Spirit. The whole of the twelve apostles may be present, with Mary and the other women; but except their prayers bring down the Spirit of God, little or nothing will be done. So, no matter what means, what agents, what resources we may have, all will be inefficient, and there will be no great success, except "*the Spirit be poured upon us from on high.*"

Until then, we shall not have *faith* to ask great things of God. The promises will be too ponderous for our grasp. We shall not give hearty credit to the willingness of God to bestow, we shall not have confidence in his word that he will bestow, we shall not rely on his faithfulness feeling sure that he will bestow. We ask now, but we do not ask in faith. We ask now, but we do not open our mouths wide that he may fill them. We ask now, but we do not ask with fervour, zeal, and importunity. Until then, we shall not have *hope* to expect great things from God. Our hope is as our faith is, for hope is the daughter of faith. Alas! how little we expect from God now. If he was to give us what we sometimes ask of him in our prayers, we should be filled with wonder and surprise. We should feel that we were not prepared to receive it. It would encumber and bewilder us. Until then, we shall not have *courage* to attempt great

things. How much thought, calculation, and deliberation, is now generally considered necessary, before any thing of consequence is attempted for God. Men can speculate, venture, and risk their property on worldly schemes; *and professors of religion too;* but ask them to join you in any noble enterprise, in any grand scheme to advance God's cause and kingdom, and where is their courage? Where? We do not attempt much, because we do not expect much, and we do not expect much, because we do not believe much. Until then we shall not have *confidence* to persevere in any great experiment, except we are animated by present success. Strong faith will give God long credit, but feeble faith wants present pay. Confident perseverance in a path believed to be right, honours God, honours the cause, and is an honour to ourselves too. But such confident perseverance there will not be, "*until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high.*" Until then fields may appear white unto the harvest, but they will not be reaped. Until then, the valley may be full of dry bones, or the plain be covered with the slain, but there will be no glorious resurrection. Until then, the wilderness will be barren and gloomy, but it will not be recovered and restored by cultivation. Until then, the garden of the Lord will be overrun with weeds and wild plants, instead of being planted with choice flowers and fruitful trees. But if once the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, then, "Instead of the thorn will come

up the fir tree, and instead of the brier will come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "Then will our light break forth as the morning, and our health shall spring forth speedily; and our righteousness shall go before us, and the glory of the Lord shall be our rereward. Then shall we call, and the Lord shall answer; we shall cry, and he shall say, Here I am."

But the passage SUGGESTS THE COURSE WE SHOULD ADOPT. Let us realize our need. Let us deeply realize it. Let us dwell upon the subject until our hearts are affected by it, until we feel that something *ought*, that something *must* be done, in order to obtain this blessing. It may be had, for God has promised it. He has said, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." And the Lord Jesus, to encourage us to seek for *this very blessing*, delivered the parable of the friend and the three loaves, in Luke xi. which he applies thus, "I say unto *you*, Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For *every one* that asketh

receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh *it shall be* opened. If a son shall ask bread of any one of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; *how much more* shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Can any thing be more plain? Can any thing be more positive? Can any thing be more encouraging? Do you wonder when you hear Paul say, "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit? Are you surprised to find James saying, "Ye have not because ye ask not, or because ye ask amiss to consume it on your lusts?" Let us then unite to seek this blessing. We read that in the days of old, Israel was gathered together "to ask help of the Lord." This is just what we should do. We should seriously think over the subject in private, until our hearts were suitably affected with it, then we should come together and unitedly join to seek this blessing at our heavenly Father's hand. How encouraging are the words of Jesus here, "I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Let us urge the promise at our Father's throne, making

that our warrant to expect, and our plea that we may receive. The Spirit is "the promise of the Father." It should be sought from the Father. It should be expected to the honour of the Son, and as a proof of the divine faithfulness. Let us then expect to obtain, and continue seeking under the influence of this expectation. Not listening to Satan. Not yielding to unbelief. Not giving way to fears. Not harbouring any doubts. But taking God's own word, in its plain, simple, and obvious meaning; and expect him to make it good. He cannot deny himself. He cannot falsify his word. He has no wish to rescind his promises. But he desires to see us hearty, earnest, and importunate at his throne. Let us also feel our responsibility. For if things are as we have stated them, or rather as God has stated them in his own word, there must be a degree of responsibility rest upon us. If the great want of the world, if the great want of the Church, if the great want of individual believers is the Holy Spirit; and if that Spirit is promised to the hearty, humble, united, and persevering prayers of God's people; and if we do not thus pray for it, are we clear? are we faultless upon this subject? Are we at liberty to choose our own course, and to walk according to our own wills? Are we not rather under solemn obligation to seek the blessing, and if we do not, either from worldliness, carelessness, forgetfulness, or selfishness, are we guiltless? Is there no blame to be attached to us? Can we boldly lift up our head as those who

have nothing to lay to their charge, or who are not at all accountable for the state of things in the world, or the Church? Have we done what we can, all we can? If we have not, are we not faulty? If we are faulty, should we not be sorry? If we are sorry, ought we not to confess it, and humble ourselves before God? If we thus confess our sins, and humble ourselves before God, shall we not forsake them? And if we forsake them, shall we not adopt a new, a different, a Scriptural course, and unite with all who will unite with us, in pleading with God "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high?"

But the passage itself holds out ENCOURAGEMENT TO SEEK THE BLESSING. The wilderness would become a fruitful field. The soil would become good. Cultivation would go on. The land would be reclaimed. The entire aspect of the desert would be changed. It would be fruitful, bringing "forth herbs meet for him by whom it is dressed, receiving blessing from God." It would become like a well-watered garden, all beautiful, all valuable, all productive, all lovely. Then would be fulfilled that beautiful promise, "The Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody." The fruitful field would be counted for a forest. The plants so numerous, each plant so strong, all together so stedfast, that the Church would look

like some extensive, wide-spread, majestic forest. And then would be brought to pass the prediction of the Prophet, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious:" Also, "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil treee; I will set in the desert the fir tree, the pine, and the box tree together; that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it." Thus Zion would be glorious, and Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth. Then we should see what we ardently desire, and enjoy what we so much long for; there would be a great shaking among the dry bones, our dead men would live, by the mighty power of the Spirit they would arise, stand up, and proclaim the wonders of sovereign grace. There would be a mighty work, such a work as would constrain on-lookers to exclaim, "The hand of the Lord hath done this," "this is the finger of God." There would be a glorious harvest, and those who now go forth weeping bearing precious seed, would doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. Then the glory of the Lord would be revealed. The beauty of the Lord our God would be upon us, and he would establish the work of our hands upon us. Then many would run to and fro and knowledge would be increased.

But "until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high," there may be a few sickly plants introduced into the garden of the Lord; there may be a feeble and inefficient church, but there will be little more. True, we may increase in wealth, our houses of prayer may be more numerous and magnificent, professors may multiply, and crowds may surround our gates; but there will be few conversions to God, there will be little deep spirituality, there will not be a return to apostolic purity, simplicity, and power. It will not be said of us, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and one soul; neither said any that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common: and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and *great grace was upon them all.*" The very life of the Church consists in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, which appears now to be very much withheld from her, and therefore she is feeble, her ministry is comparatively powerless, and her success is small. Every member of the Church ought to realize this and to mourn over it, and the whole should arise as one man, to plead with God until he pour us down this blessing. If all were honest to their profession, true to their engagements, right hearted in the cause, or were willing to become so, we should soon experience a change—a mighty, a glorious, an astounding change—as it is written, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse and *prove me now herewith,*

saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Brethren, how shall it be? Shall we be content to live at this poor dying rate? Shall we be satisfied to go on as we have been of late? Or, shall we awake from our slumbers, shake ourselves from our lethargy, congregate together to seek help of the Lord, and let our earnestness, assiduity, and importunity prove that we are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, and desire most heartily that "the Spirit may be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest?"

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And warm with uncreated fire!
Thou, the anointing Spirit art—
Who dost thy seven-fold gifts impart
Thy blessed unction from above,
Is comfort, life, and fire of love!

Illumine with perpetual light,
The dulness of our mortal sight!
Anoint, and cheer us, all our days,
With the abundance of thy grace!
Our foes convert, give peace at home—
Where thou art guide, no ill can come!

TWENTY GOOD REASONS FOR NOT GOING TO A CONCERT

1. I CANNOT go to a concert, because I do not believe that the Holy Spirit inspired godly men to write the Scriptures in order that they may be set to music, to gratify the carnal taste, and animal senses of men.

2. I cannot go to a concert, because I do not believe that God, who is jealous of his honour, and who has magnified his word above all his name, can look upon such a desecration of that word but with displeasure and disapprobation.

3. I cannot go to a concert, because my property and all that I possess is the Lord's, and I do not feel justified in taking the Lord's money and giving it for such a purpose.

4. I cannot go to a concert, because I am commanded to redeem time for good and godly purposes; but while I go to a concert I cannot do so.

5. I cannot go to a concert, because I believe that I should please God more, by using the money that my ticket would cost, in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or procuring comforts for the sick poor.

6. I cannot go to a concert, because I believe that the time would be much better spent in visiting the sick, in self-examination, in reading God's word, or in private prayer.

7. I cannot go to a concert, because I believe that my example in going there would do harm; for if I go to a religious concert, others may conclude that they would be justified in going to a dance, a ball, or the theatre.

8. I cannot go to a concert, because the Lord Jesus has told me that he will come *soon* and *suddenly*, and has commanded me to watch and be ready for his appearing; and I should not like for him to come and find me at a concert.

9. I cannot go to a concert, because the Church of God generally, is in a very low state; the Spirit of God appears to be grieved with us; and I fear that the worldly conformity, self-indulgence, and love to carnal pleasure, which characterizes many professors, is very much the cause of it, and I do not wish to be accessary thereto.

10. I cannot go to a concert, because millions of my fellow-creatures in heathen lands, and thousands of my brethren in this land, are perishing for lack of knowledge; and all I can *do*, and all I can *give*, are required to assist in sending the blessed Gospel to them.

11. I cannot go to a concert, because I do not think that when I come to lie on my dying pillow, I shall be able to look back on the money spent, and the time squandered at a concert, with either pleasure or satisfaction.

12. I cannot go to a concert, because I am commanded to do all that I do, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with a view to the glory of

God; and I do not see how I can go to a concert in Christ's name, or promote the glory of God thereby.

13. I cannot go to a concert, because I am required to imitate those who honoured God, served their generation, and are now inheriting the promises; and I cannot think that either Peter, Paul, or John, would have gone to a concert after the day of Pentecost.

14. I cannot go to a concert, because I am commanded to copy the example of the Lord Jesus, who went about doing good, and I am persuaded that he never patronised such a profanation of sacred things as is witnessed at a concert.

15. I cannot go to a concert, because I am directed to live in the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit; and if I am constantly under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, I am satisfied that I shall not be found at a concert.

16. I cannot go to a concert, because as it is, I have but very little of that religion which stands in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and going to a concert is not the way to increase it.

17. I cannot go to a concert, because my spirit is naturally carnal, and is very easily wrought upon by carnal things, and is thereby unfitted for spiritual duties and privileges; and I fear that the tendency of the excitement of the concert is only to carnalize, and incapacitate for close walking with God.

18. I cannot go to a concert, because I have publicly professed that real religion is happiness, and that there is more pleasure in the duties and privileges of religion, than there is in every thing beside; and going to a concert would be likely to leave the impression on the minds of carnal persons, that this is not true, and therefore I must go to the concert for pleasure and satisfaction.

19. I cannot go to a concert, because on the night of the concert, family religion must be neglected, the hour of dismission being late, my family would be wearied out; and I do not feel justified in neglecting such a duty, for the mere gratification of the sense of hearing.

20. I cannot go to the concert, because I am expressly told, that I must give an account of myself to God, and I do not feel that I could present at the judgment seat of Christ, a satisfactory reason for going to a concert.

In a word, whatever will conform us to the image of Christ, increase in us the power of the Holy Spirit, lead to high and holy communion with God, make us useful in life, prepare us for death, and meeten us for glory, should be persued with all our might; and whatever would hinder us in such a course should be avoided. Which will the concert do?

I KNOW THE JUDGE.

It is a solemn thing to stand before a human tribunal, but "we must all stand befere the judgment seat of Christ;" for God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, and Jesus is appointed Judge. He searcheth all hearts. He knows the exact state of our nature. He has observed every action of our lives. He has listened to every word we have spoken. He has noticed every motive that has influenced us. He has marked the end we had in view in every word and in every action of our life. He will judge righteously,—he will minister judgment to the people in uprightness. Are you not afraid of His coming? Do you not dread the thought of appearing before Him? Must not all do so? Go to the bedside of that dying Christian; he realizes the dread solemnities of eternity, he has been thinking of that solemn day when small and great shall stand before God,—ask him, "Do you not tremble at the idea of appearing before the judgment seat of Christ?" See, his countenance is lighted up with a smile; there are no traces of fear in his pale face; he replies emphatically, "No!" Ask him the reason, and *now* listen to his reply. He speaks he says, "I KNOW THE JUDGE." Unspeakable blessing this! Unparalleled mercy! Yet this unspeakable blessing, this unparalleled

mercy may be ours. Yes, we may so live, so believe, as to die without fear, go before the judgment seat without alarm, because WE KNOW THE JUDGE.

Who will judge the world? JESUS. And what is Jesus to the Christian? He is his BROTHER. Yes, my brother will be my Judge. He was my God by nature, he became my brother by an act of grace. He took my nature to save my soul. He was born for adversity. He has a brother's heart. He loves me with a brother's love. His heart was set upon me in eternity, therefore he came into the world to save me in time. He obeyed the law for me; he died a sacrifice in my stead. He carried his own blood into heaven to plead it on my behalf. He put his book into my hand, and his Spirit into my heart. He has prepared a place for me in his Father's house, and has promised to come again and receive me unto himself, that where he is, I might be also. And shall I fear to stand before HIM? Why, he died for me that he might not condemn me. He lived in heaven for me that he might save me. He will summon me before him simply to reward me.

Whose judgment seat is it? "The judgment seat of Christ." And what is Jesus to the Christian? He is his HUSBAND. Yes, Jesus says, "*I am married unto thee.*" He chose us to be his bride because he loved us. He ransomed us to be his bride because his heart was set upon us. He gave his life for us, and he

has placed all his merit to our account. We shall rise from the dead in his likeness, and stand forth on that glorious Lord's day morning, perfect in holiness, the objects of universal admiration. Love us more than he does, he cannot. Love us less than he does, he will not. He is devotedly attached to us, and thought nothing too difficult to undertake for us, nothing too dreadful to suffer for us, nothing too good or too great to bestow upon us. And shall we fear to stand before HIM? Why, he loved us, and gave himself for us, that he might present us unto himself most glorious. What! fear to stand before our husband, and such a husband? This can never be if we really know him.

Who will sit on the throne on that day? JESUS. And what is Jesus to the believer? He is his FATHER. His everlasting Father. The Father who begat him, who educated him, who trained him up for glory, honour, and immortality. Who has pitied him, borne with him, blessed him, and promised never to leave him or forsake him. The Father who has written his name in his book, engraved him on the palms of his hands, and given the everlasting kingdom to him. The Father who never lost a child, disinherited a son, or refused to receive a returning prodigal. The Father who rejoices over his children, and has promised to present them all before HIS Father, saying, "Here am I, Father, and the children which thou hast given me." And shall we fear to stand before him? Why, he will look upon

us with a father's eye, feel towards us all the tender yearnings of a father's heart, and stretch out towards us a father's hand, saying, "COME, YE BLESSED." What! fear to stand before our Father, and a Father who laid down his life for us.

Before whose judgment seat must we appear? The judgment seat of Jesus. And what is Jesus to the believer? He is his SAVIOUR. This is the title he has won. This is the name he wears. This is the office he fills. He saves, not merely helps. He saves, not assists. The price demanded, he paid. The righteousness required, he wrought. The strength necessary, he furnishes. The Spirit needed, he bestows. The wisdom requisite, he imparts. He has a Saviour's heart, and he has a Saviour's wealth. He *will* save, for it was in his heart to do so, he engaged in the everlasting covenant to do so, he pledged himself in his everlasting word to do so, and he delights to do so. He *can* save, for he has all merit, all mercy, and all might. Salvation is at once his business, his honour, and his delight. He has saved us righteously, yet freely; justly, yet graciously. He parted with every thing rather than part with his people, or suffer one of them to perish. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." And shall we fear to stand before HIM? What! before my SAVIOUR? Why, he was my Substitute, Sacri-

fice, and Surety; he died for my offences, and rose again for my justification; and being *now* justified by his blood, and assured that I shall be saved from wrath through him, shall I tremble to stand before him?

Reader, you must stand before the judgment seat of Christ; do you KNOW THE JUDGE? Is he your Friend? Are you reconciled to him? Have you confidence in him? Are you looking for salvation by him? Are you his friend? Do you know his person? Do you love his name? Do you trust in his blood? Do you wear his righteousness? Do you walk by his word? Do you possess his Spirit? Do you copy his example? Do you aim to do his will? Can you say with Paul, "I live by the faith of the Son of God?" If so, happy are you. You need not fear death, or be alarmed by the near approach of the judgment day. You are safe. Your state is fixed. Your character is stamped. Your conduct is approved. Your mansion is prepared. Your welcome home will be hearty. Your glory will be great. Your happiness will be complete. Go on, my brother, my sister,—cleave to Jesus; walk in close and holy fellowship with Jesus; aim to bring honour to the dear name of Jesus; grow up into him your living head in all things; and if any speak to you of judgment, or if Satan try to harass with the thought of the last great day, let this be your reply, "I KNOW THE JUDGE."

But, sinner, *you* must stand before him, and

account for your rejection of him. You must assign your reasons for closing your eyes, ears, and heart against him. You must give an account of yourself to God. To *you* the Day of Judgment will be a dreadful day. You will stand *alone*. No friend to speak for you. No advocate to plead for you. No mercy will be extended to you. Oh, it will be fearful to appear *thus* before the judgment seat of Christ! To be charged with violating his law, despising his gospel, rejecting his mercy, setting at nought all his counsel, and saying, "I will not have him to rule over me." You do not know the Judge. You know not the power of his anger. You know not the terror of his frown. You know not the weight of his wrath. The eye which is as a flame of fire will be fixed upon you, and pierce you through and through. The voice which is like the sound of many waters, or the most terrific thunder, will pronounce your doom. And that hand which was once nailed to the accursed tree will strike the dreadful blow. Eternity alone will measure the duration of your punishment, if you dare to persevere in sin, and die without hope. "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts. iii. 19.)

LOVE TO CHRIST.

Love is generally drawn forth by beauty exhibited, or by kindness shown. We love the beautiful and the benevolent. To the carnal mind there is no beauty in Jesus, because its taste is vitiated, and its perception is depraved. It calls darkness light, and light darkness; it puts bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. We do not expect the natural man to see the beauty of the Redeemer's person, or to be inflamed to love by his attractions. Still the beautiful ought to be loved, and "he is altogether lovely;" and the reason why he is not loved is to be found in the corruption of human nature, and the depravity of the sinner's heart. If you see nothing in Jesus to love, it is evident that you are under the power of darkness. If you have never really loved him, you are dead in trespasses and sins. What an awful state! What a fearful thought this!

But one would think that if we were in imminent peril, and one rescued us at the risk of his own life,—if we were condemned to die, and one obtained our pardon at a great price,—if we were starving with hunger, and one provided food for us at his own expense,—if we were dying with disease, and one procured a remedy at his own cost,—if we were taken captive by a cruel foe, fettered, imprisoned, and exposed to innumerable

woes, and one paid the price of our ransom out of his own purse,—we should, we must, love him. But Jesus has done more than this. He left the throne of glory, the worship of angels, the joys of heaven; he came to earth and took the form of a servant; he obeyed the law and magnified it; he offered himself a sacrifice to divine justice, and satisfied it; he ascended to heaven to plead for sinners, obtained the Holy Spirit for all who ask him, and is now able and willing to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. He has opened an infinite fulness of blessings, which contains all that we can want and wish; and he has sent his servants with his word to inform us, that he is waiting to be gracious; that he delights in mercy; that he is ready to save. He commands it to be proclaimed in his name, that every sinner who believes his word, relies on his atonement, and depends on his perfect work, shall be instantly pardoned, perfectly justified, infallibly guided, wisely instructed, plentifully supplied, powerfully protected, and eternally saved. He promises to give the richest blessings to every coming sinner, without money and without price. He has pledged his word that he will refuse no one that comes, and commands all who come to go and publish the fact, that "whosoever will may come, and take of the fountain of the water of life freely." In a word, he is A SAVIOUR,—THE SAVIOUR,—THE ONLY SAVIOUR. He thought nothing too difficult to perform, nothing too costly to give, nothing too painful to suffer,

nothing too shameful to endure, if he might but save sinners, and save them freely. And he has done all, paid all, suffered all, and is prepared to save every one who is willing to be saved by him on his own terms. He saves sinners with pleasure. It is his delight to save the very vilest of our race. He has saved innumerable millions of mankind, and he is able and willing to save millions more. Nor is it possible to point to any person and say, "The Lord Jesus is not willing to save him." Or to any tribe, however sunk, degraded, and debased, and say, "He is unable, or unwilling to save them."

Now, ought not such a one to be loved? Ought not *you* to love him? For what he *is*, for what he *has*, for what he *is willing to do*, if not for what he has done for you. God requires you to love him. Reason demands that you love him. Common sense says that you should love him. And yet many do not love him. Yea, no one will love him without the heart is changed by the Holy Spirit. The mind must be completely changed before it will love Christ. He is light, but men love darkness. He is holy, but men love sin. He is the image of God, but men love the likeness of Satan. But is there any excuse for us, if we do not love Jesus? There is none. There can be none. God will allow of none. Hence the Holy Spirit, speaking by the Apostle Paul, says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed." (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) How general, "*if any man.*" Any man who

has heard of Christ, having listened to his gospel. Any man who has read of Christ, having received his holy book. If any man, poor or rich, illiterate or learned, "if *any* man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed." How terrible, "*let him be accursed.*" Let him be condemned by God, driven from God, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of God. What, blessed apostle, meek and gentle servant of Christ, doom *every one* to hell who does not love the Saviour! "Yes, without passion, without excitement, without any improper feeling, I say, '*If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.*'" But think how terrible a place hell is, how awful God's curse must be, what tremendous agonies are included in eternal punishment. "I *have* thought, I *do* think, *I know it all,* and with all before me, while full of love to man, and desiring above all things on earth the salvation of all who hear me, or read what I write, yet, I repeat, '*If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.*'" What, that fine young man? "Yes, if he love not Christ." What, that amiable young woman? "Yes, if she love not Christ." What, that venerable, silver-haired, prudent, and kind-hearted man? "Yes, if he love not Christ. I make no exceptions. If any man who has heard what Jesus is, what Jesus has done, what Jesus has said, what Jesus is willing to bestow upon all classes and all characters,—if any such person love not Jesus, he *deserves* to be accursed, his

doom and destiny is to be accursed." Oh, my reader, my dear fellow-immortal, think of these things; and ask yourself most seriously, "*Do I love Christ?* Do I love his people,—his house, —his day,—his servants,—his gospel,—do I love himself? Do I love to read of him,—to hear of him,—to think of him,—to speak of him,—to hold fellowship with him? Do I so love him as to wish to be like him, long to see him, and desire to spend eternity with him?" Oh, Spirit of Jesus, shed abroad his love in our hearts, that if we have never loved him before, we may do so now; and, if we *have* loved him, we may love him ten times more!

And have I, Christ, no love for thee,
No passion for thy charms?
No wish my Saviour's face to see,
And dwell within his arms?

Is there no spark of gratitude
In this cold heart of mine,
To him whose generous bosom glow'd
With friendship all divine?

Can I pronounce his charming name,
His acts of kindness tell;
And while I dwell upon the theme,
No sweet emotion feel?

Such base ingratitude as this
What heart but must detest!
Sure Christ deserves the noblest place
In every human breast.

EVERY CHRISTIAN TO HIS CLOSET.

As prayer is the breathing of the soul toward God, wherever there is spiritual life there must be prayer. But as many Christians are alive, but not lively, it is often necessary to stir them up to "pray without ceasing." Without trials, temptations, and troubles, or the special operations of the Holy Spirit on the soul, prayer will become formal, lifeless, and inefficient. Therefore we are so frequently tried by Divine Providence, spoken to in God's holy Word, and stirred up by the Holy and ever-blessed Spirit. A voice now seems to be calling to the Lord's Church, to every member of that Church, and it says, "*Every Christian to his closet.*" That every Christian has some special place for prayer, either in the house or in the open air, may be taken for granted; and such spots become in time consecrated places, where we expect to meet with God, and hold fellowship with him. A Christian *closeted with God* is a sight an angel looks upon with interest; nor can we think of it but with peculiar emotions. Lately all has been bustle in the Church; our public meetings have been held, reports read, speeches made, interest excited, money subscribed, and now "*every Christian to his closet.*" This is what is necessary. Every day some time should be set apart for *special prayer.* For if ever special prayer was neces-

sary, it is *now*. Let us, then, enter into our closet, shut our door, and pray unto our Father in secret.

God invites us. He says, "Let me hear thy voice." He loves to hear us. He waits to listen to us. He is prepared to bless us. It is in his loving heart to do us good. We have not because we ask not, not because God is unprepared or unwilling to bestow. Jesus is before the throne for us. He has his priestly garments on. The precious incense is in his hands. He sympathizes with us. He loves to introduce us. He ever lives to intercede for us. True, he knows our backwardness to pray, our coldness in prayer, and all the infirmities that compass us about; but he says, "Think not that I will accuse you unto the Father." Oh, no! he will plead for us, but he will never turn our accuser. The Holy Spirit urges us. We often feel his promptings. We often hear his exhortations. He is the Spirit of prayer. He helps our infirmities in prayer. He is often grieved by our prayerlessness. He takes us by the hand in tender love, and says, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord." The Church needs our prayers. Look at her thin congregations. Look at her undisciplined troops. Look at her neglected prayer meetings. Look at her empty exchequer. Look at her vacant pulpits. Look at her wandering tribes. Look —look where you will, from what point you please, a voice will be heard, if you attentively listen, saying, "*Every Christian to his closet.*"

The ministry requires your prayers. The standard-bearers are ready to faint. The labourers sigh in the harvest field. There is a want of power in the ministry. The word falls like the snow-flake, and makes but little impression. Sinners come and go, and there are but few converted to God. Impressions are made, but they are not deep, abiding, and renovating. The seed falls in the stony places, among the thorns, or on the way side. We sow much, but we reap but little. There is a want of unction. There is a dryness, a dullness, a deadness about our ministerial communications. The word is not like the holy anointing oil of old, which filled the house, and delighted every heart. It does not glide into the soul, softening, sanctifying, and elevating all its powers. Therefore our members are not thorough-going, hard-working, and energetic Christians. From the thousand pulpits of our land, in every section of the one Church of Christ, there is a call to the sacramental host of God's elect, "*Every Christian to his closet.*"

The world demands your prayers. It still lies in the Wicked One. It is still "full of the habitations of cruelty." Darkness still "covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." The field of labour is the world. But in vain we send out our foreign, or employ our home and city missionaries, except the Spirit be poured upon us from on high. Thorns and thistles will it still bring forth unto us. We plough on the rock; we sow on the sand; we labour in vain, and

spend our strength for nought, so far as spiritual cultivation is concerned, without the Holy Ghost. Are missionaries to be successful? Is the world to be claimed for Christ? Would we have the prophecies and predictions of the Holy Scripture fulfilled? Then "*every Christian to his closet,*" and instead of the thorn will come up the fir tree, instead of the brier will come up the myrtle tree, and "it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

Our country, our beloved Old England, needs your prayers. Popery is insolent. Puseyism is powerful. Infidelity is rampant. Saints are divided. Politics are poisoning many professors. Look where we will, to the Senate-house or the sanctuary, to the palace or the cottage, to princes or peasants, to professors or profane, all seem to sigh or cry aloud, "*Every Christian to his closet.*" "God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God." The power that guides the vessel of the State, the power that steers the ark of the Church, the power that preserves our liberties, the power that crowns our efforts, the power that curbs our foes, and the power that encourages our friends, alike belongs unto God. If, therefore, we would be loyal subjects, if we would be good soldiers of the cross, if we would be successful servants of God, if we would see the good of God's chosen, rejoice in the gladness of his nation, and glory with his inheritance, let every Christian betake himself to his closet.

Let us seek the Spirit of prayer, fix times for prayer, and determine to persevere in prayer. Let us pray frequently. Let us pray fervently. Let us plead earnestly. We not only need more prayer, but a different kind of prayer. Our prayers have been too general, too formal, too common-place. There has not been that point, that directness, that downright earnestness which there ought to be. We do not take hold on God. We do not refuse to take a denial, saying as Jacob did, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." We forget the parable of the widow and the unjust judge (Luke xviii.), and the parable of the friend and the three loaves (Luke xi.), with its application, "*I say unto you*, ASK, SEEK, KNOCK." Be importunate. Take no denial. "Cry day and night." "Give him no rest." Pray as if you meant every word you say—as if you wanted every blessing you ask for—as if you did not intend to give over until you had succeeded. These are the kind of prayers which God approves of, which the church needs, which the times require, which we most affectionately request our brethren to present. Such prayers would rouse the enmity of Satan, stir the drowsy Church to its very depth, shake the wide world, and bring down the power of God upon us all. Such prayers would carry our hearts up to heaven, bring the fulness of the Spirit into our soul; and, as grace makes us more than men, such prayers would make us more than common Christians. Let us endeavour to pray in faith, believe that God is love, that he delights in

mercy, that he rejoices over us to do us good, that he is more ready to hear than we are to pray, that he means every word in his exceeding great and precious promises, that he is now in the same mind as when he made them, as when his Apostles pleaded them, and the Holy Spirit came down and proved them true; believing that real prayer goes direct to the heart of God, stirs us his tenderest sympathies, and brings him down to work for our welfare. When Israel in Egypt sighed, cried, and groaned before God, he could not rest on his throne, but came down into the bush, brought Moses to his foot, and as one full of the tenderest sympathy, said, "I have heard, I have heard the groanings of my people which are in Egypt, and am come down to deliver them. Come, I will send thee unto them." Let us pray in hope, that is, expecting what we pray for, and expecting it because it is needed, because it is good, because God has promised it, because Jesus is worthy, in whose name we ask it, and because God can glorify himself in bestowing it.

Beloved! would you please God? Would you honour Jesus? Would you sow to the Spirit? Would you disappoint Satan? Would you rise above the world? Would you be an honour to the Church? Would you be useful in your day and generation? Would you be happy and holy in life? Would you be peaceful and victorious in death? In a word, would you possess, enjoy, and manifest the real power of true religion? Then, *to your closet!* Be much with God; ob-

tain much from God; communicate every thing to God. This is the way to act for God wisely, to give to God liberally, to walk with God comfortably, to fight for God victoriously, to work for God successfully, and to be conformed more and more to the moral image of God daily. We *must* have more prayer. We must have a different kind of prayer. The times call for it. Eternity calls for it. The Church calls for it. The world calls for it. Our religious societies call for it. Our discouraged pastors and preachers call for it. From the east, from the west, from the north, and from the south; from the rolling ocean, from the flowing river, from the lofty mountains, from the lowly vales, from the populous cities, from the scattered hamlets, from the mansions of the great, from the cottages of the poor, from the Slave States of America, and from this blest land of the free, the voice comes rolling in tones of thunder, or floats on the gentle breeze, in almost inaudible accents, it cries, it calls, it whispers, "EVERY CHRISTIAN TO HIS CLOSET." Shall the voice be heard? Shall the cry be regarded? Shall the admonition be received? Shall the closet be visited as it never has been heretofore? Shall the private, powerful, persevering prayers of the saints bring down upon us the Spirit from on high, that the wilderness may become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest? Men of Israel! will *you* help? Servants of God! will *you* assist? Courteous reader! will *you* make one? *Will you?* And will you BEGIN TO-DAY?

A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

I AM one, my Christian friend, beset with doubts and fears. I, at times, earnestly desire to love Christ, to lie passive at the foot of the cross, and to grow in grace. I sit under the sound of a minister, who is a warm champion in the cause of truth. I have for some years been signing for liberty; but I find in my heart such a cage of unclean birds, so many powerful foes to contend with, that I sometimes think, instead of making any advancement in the spiritual road, I shall sink in the slough of despond, and utterly perish. Now, notwithstanding you are like myself, the subject of evil passions, there are times when you can call God your Father, Christ your Brother, and the Holy Ghost your Comforter; while I can only say with the Poet,

If I love, why am I thus?

I have thought much lately of two passages of Scripture, one in the twentieth chapter of Matthew, and the 10th verse, and the other in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, and the 70th verse. Judas, it appears, was chosen with the other disciples, but hell was his portion. Do you not think, that before he was tempted to betray Christ, he loved him? Do you not think he felt the same indignation that Peter did, when he said, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will

not I." I fear sometimes, I am like Judas; I often attend the means, delight in the society of God's own people, feel my spirits cheered after conversing with them, and feel my best moments to be those wherein I can trample the world beneath my feet: yet this is, alas! so seldom the case, that I fear my hope is a false one. I cannot see such a character as mine in the Scriptures Do you suppose that Mary Magdalene, and others of whom we read as having their transgressions pardoned, after they were led to the feet of Christ, would sin as they formerly had done? No, no! But *my* heart tells me I am every moment rebelling against Omnipotence; and, although I am kept from outward, gross immoralities, yet, my inward foes are continually striving for the mastery. You, my Christian friend, are travelling the road to Zion, but you find for *your* comfort, that "greater is he that is for you, than all those who are against you." *My foes* at present are the mightiest. Satan tempts me; and my wicked heart is opposed to every good desire; for when I would do good, evil is not only present with me, but it leads me from Christ, and I am carried away with one temptation and another, till I fear at last, I shall utterly fall.

A PILGRIM.

REPLY TO A PILGRIM.

FIRST PART.

MY DEAR FELLOW-PILGRIM,

HAVING read your address, I laid both it and your case before the Lord, entreating him to send you an answer of peace, and now I take my pen to offer a few remarks. You say you are beset with doubts and fears: this is nothing uncommon, the corruption of our nature is such, that it leads us to manifest the greatest enmity to Jehovah while in a state of nature, and to discover a mistrust of his sincerity, his love, and his designs even in a state of grace. It is no small matter in the present state of our nature, to give Jehovah credit for speaking the truth; to receive his word as infallible verity, and draw from it the consolation it is calculated to impart. To conceive, harbour, and indulge hard and dishonourable thoughts of God is no task; but the opposite requires the interference and operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart. If we could but receive God's word as infallible truth, and embrace its contents as directed to us, all our doubts and fears must very soon vanish. But there is in many, a secret love to doubting, and therefore they nurse their doubts, and seize upon every thing that is calculated to strengthen and encourage them. But doubting is dishonouring to God, distressing to the soul, and only pleases

Satan; for ANY SINNER made heartily willing to be saved by Jesus Christ, alone of free grace, to the glory of God, to doubt is unscriptural, and highly sinful: such characters cannot be rejected at the throne of grace, nor will they be condemned at the throne of judgment.

But *you* earnestly desire to love Christ, to lie passive at the foot of the cross, and to grow in grace. Whence think you did these desires spring? Have you a nature so good, from which they could spontaneously grow? or is there a devil so holy that he would produce them? The desires you speak of are of Divine production, none but God could raise them in your heart, and he who raised them will gratify them: for "he will fulfill the desire of them that fear him; he will also hear their cry, and will save them." Psal. cxlv. 19. Is not this passage plain, positive, and to the point? Can God be true and you honest, and yet your desires end in confusion? "Let God be true and every man a liar." You have been sighing for liberty: but how came you to feel your bondage and long for freedom? Do persons in a state of nature feel or act thus? You know they do not. But have you ever heartily surrendered yourself to the Lord? Have you taken his word and pleaded it at his throne? Are you striving to enter in at the strait gate? Many persons lie down in sloth, and then complain of bondage; indulge in secret sin, and yet speak of sighing for liberty. As to your heart it is just like mine, no man has

a worse, none have a better; for "as face answereth to face in water, so does the heart of man to man." It is abominable and filthy, drinking in iniquity like water, by nature. Job xv. 16. It is just enmity against God, a hold of every foul spirit. You have one of the best hearts in the world, yet yours "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," Jer. xvii. 9. You make no advancement in the spiritual road. Are you now just where you was when your eyes were first opened? Surely you have seen greater things in self, in sin, in the world, in the church, in Jesus since then; I cannot think you have been lying still, or going back all the time; *but have you told out all the truth?* Cannot you remember some seasons of light, of comfort, and holy peace; when Jesus was truly precious, sin peculiarly hateful, holiness unspeakably lovely, and your soul felt sweet liberty before God? I dare say you know something of these things, let honest conscience give the answer. As to your utterly perishing, I question if you seriously believe any such thing, and I dare say if any one else was to say so to you, you would immediately begin to plead, argue, and ask on the ground of certain portions of the word of God if it could be the case. I have met with many of your family who have done so, I have tried them on purpose, and have found they could plead manfully for their safety when brought to the test, notwithstanding all their fears.

The privileges I enjoy belong also to you; as

many as receive Christ, it is their privilege to be the sons of God; and God himself says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and I will receive you; and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" John i. 12; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18; Jer. iii. 4. Now I have received Christ as God's free gift to poor sinners, I have left the world in spirit and in truth, and I am warranted to call God my Father, Jesus my Brother, Heb. ii. 11, and the Holy Ghost my Comforter, John xiv. 16, 17. I say not that I have no other reason to use this language, but if I had not, my title would be indisputable, and would be admitted in the high court of heaven, for Jehovah cannot deny himself. You say, "If I love, why am I thus?" Many reasons may be assigned; perhaps you have never yet resigned yourself and your all unreservedly to Jesus; there may be some wedge of gold, some little one, some image of jealousy spared; if so, God will have a controversy with you, for only they who forsake in heart and affections all, and follow Christ, must expect to enjoy the comfort of knowing they are his disciples in peace and holy joy. Luke xiv. 33. He is jealous of his glory, if he is not in our estimation more than all, he may as well be nought at all; he must either be Christ or a cipher, he never will be wedded with idols, or be satisfied with a divided heart. Hosea x. 1, 2. He says, "My

son, give me thine heart:" and the heart, the whole heart he will have. I doubt not but that there is a controversy carried on in many on this point for many years, until at last the soul stands to the surrender, and then comfort and peace are enjoyed. It may be you are looking into yourself, for something to warrant you to come and claim the blessings of the Gospel; and not finding what you suppose to be necessary, you are cast down, this is the case with many. But where does God direct you to do this, or sanction such a proceeding? He says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." Isa. lv. 1. Jesus says, "If any man thirst," no matter of what name, nation, or in what condition; if he thirst, "let him come unto me, and drink." John vii. 37. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev. xxi. 7. And the Holy Spirit says, "Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. Under the figures of wine, milk, and the water of life, are set forth all things that pertain to life and godliness; and all these are said to be for the thirsty, the poor or moneyless, and the willing. Now do you thirst? are you poor? are you willing? if so, the God of truth says, you are heartily welcome to take as if taking of your own, all these things. Can you have a better time, or a better warrant, than the word, this

faithful word of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit? The language is so plain a child may understand it, it is expressed in terms so positive and decisive, that it is a wonder that any persons should be found looking into self for something to warrant them to claim the blessing of grace and salvation. But may not a willing soul be refused? No, it is impossible; for "*every one* that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it SHALL be opened." Luke xi. 10. Now if you are looking for something in yourself to bring with you to God, or to embolden you before him, or to encourage you to expect from him; you are legalizing the Gospel, insulting free grace, and making the word of God of none effect; and no wonder that you are doubting, fearing, and cast down. But say you, Am I to come to God when I feel my heart a nest of every evil, and experience the working of every God-dishonouring principle, and expect that God will receive me, bless me, and be a Father to me? Yes, exactly so: and that because he invites you to come then, Isa. i. 18; expostulates with you about not coming, Isa. lv. 2; and promises what he will do if you come, Psal. l. 15.

Another reason why you are thus, may be your not receiving into your mind the truth that "GOD IS LOVE:" that he "IS IN CHRIST:" that fury is not in him: that "he delighteth in mercy:" that he is "READY TO FORGIVE." Thus he is revealed to you in the Gospel, as such a

God you are invited to him. You have nothing to do with his wrath, nothing to fear from his justice, there is nothing to be alarmed at in his holiness. He is love, pure, unmixed love, to every sinner who is willing and desirous to be saved by free grace, through Jesus Christ, by faith. Eph. ii. 1—8. Now do you believe when approaching God, that he is love; that like as a father pitieth his children; so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame; and remembereth that we are dust? Psal. ciii. 13, 14. If not, you worship Jehovah in a mistaken character. O how often do the Lord's people array the glorious majesty of heaven in fearful and dreadful attributes, the coinage of their own brain, or the vile misrepresentations of Satan, and then tremble before him as though he were a real tyrant, rather than a gracious God. Many sincere but mistaken souls, complain of want of love, and grieve because they cannot love God; but ask them what are their conceptions of Jehovah, and ten to one but you find that they are indulging wrong views of the Divine character. Jesus is the visible representative of the invisible Jehovah. John i. 18. What Jesus did, preached, suffered, and displayed, exhibits Jehovah to our view exactly as he is to us under the Gospel. John xiv. 8, 9. Did Jesus ever frown away a sinner from him, refuse to confer a needful favour, or complain of a want of preparation in any who came to him? Never! The conduct and preaching of Jesus sets forth

Jehovah in the most endearing, inviting, and amiable point of view possible; there is every thing to encourage the sinner who seeks at his feet, and to assure the suppliant who pleads at his throne. Until you receive into your mind right conceptions of Jehovah as revealed in the Gospel, you never will have a steady confidence in his promises, a warm love to his name, or enjoy daily fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

But perhaps you are naturally of a melancholy turn of mind, always looking at the worst side of every thing, and are guilty of feeding this disorder; this is the case with many of God's family. It becomes you to ascertain whether this is your case, and if it is, it is your duty to watch against it, pray against it, and to the utmost of your power to resist it. I have known some of the Lord's people who have been doubting and gloomy for years, the principle cause of which was found in the natural constitution, who have after they have been brought to discover it, confessed with shame their weakness, folly, and sin. If this is your case you will find your mind constantly reverting to things of a gloomy and distressing character, and putting away as unsuitable what is calculated to comfort and cheer. Satan will take great advantage of such a person, and be found constantly leading the mind to fearful and alarming portions of God's word, which belongs only to hardened professors, open sinners, or sly hypocrites · he

will open them to the mind in a sly, crafty, manner, and apply them as exactly describing the state, character, condition, and doom of the soul. This will bewilder the judgment, harden the heart against God, close the soul against the consolation of the Gospel, and bind down the mind to the contemplation of terror; then prayer becomes a dry duty, a hard task, a heavy burden; the preached word falls like a shower on a rock, and this state is often succeeded or attended with a host of temptations, not fit to be once named among us as becometh saints. Then he comes as an accuser, sets these things before us in all their aggravated characters, insinuates that our case is singular, and then asks, "Are you a child of God? Do you think that God's people are infested with such awful thoughts, filled with such fearful rebellion against God, or experience such a hardened state? No, no! Your case is singular; you have sinned against light and knowledge; you are become Gospel hardened; it is in vain to attempt to pray, for God will not hear you; you have prayed again and again, but where are your answers? you know God has not given you your request, nor will he give his blessings to such a vile hardened, polluted wretch as you are. He gives to all his own children, but he does not give to you, which makes it clear you are not a child of God. Where is his tenderness towards you, where his bowels of mercies, where his love and favour? you know you are a stranger to them, therefore

your state is bad, your case is desperate, and your doom fearful." And, if he does not proceed so far as this, he often proceeds far enough to fill the mind with confusion, slavish fear, and gloomy apprehensions; I know quite enough about it, but blessed be God he never has had it all his own way, nor never will.—But I am going beyond all limits, I must conclude for the present; perhaps I may consider what remains of your address in a second paper, if the Lord will. In the mean while cheer up, FELLOW-PILGRIM, if you hate sin; pant for holiness; are tired of the vanities of the world; and love the spiritual and holy of God's people; fear not, but LOOK TO JESUS and rejoice in his dear name.

SECOND PART.

MY DEAR FELLOW-PILGRIM,

I NOW proceed to glance at the passages upon which your thoughts have been exercised, Matt. xx. 10. In the context Jesus had been speaking of the difficulty of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of heaven, this alarmed and surprised the disciples, now in a state of spiritual childhood; and they ask, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus answers them by referring to the power of God. Peter then says, "We have forsaken all and followed thee; and what shall we have therefore?" Our Lord then says, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration," the new dispensation, "when

the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel:" perhaps alluding to Isa. xxxii. 1—8. And not only shall *ye* be honoured, but "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first. For the kingdom of heaven," &c.; then follows the parable in illustration of the statement made. Those who were first hired set forth the Jews, those who were hired later the Gentiles; what Paul calls God's mystery, Eph. iii., that the Gentiles should be *fellow-heirs*, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel; was the cause of the dissatisfaction manifested. That some did act so, see Acts xi. 2, &c.; xiii. 45—52; xvii. 5—13; xviii. 6, 13; xxii. 21—22; xxviii. 29; Rom. xi. 28; 1 Thess. ii. 16. The Jews supposed that they should still be distinguished, and favoured above the rest of mankind; but finding that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, Col. iii. 11; Gal. iii. 28, 29: but that they who are of the faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, Gal. iii. 9: this stirred up their prejudices and filled them with indignation, and "they murmured against the goodman of the house," &c. I see nothing in this parable or its connexion to disturb the mind of my fellow-pilgrim in the least; the Lord is

good, equitable in all his dealings, and righteous in all his ways.

In John vi. 70, we read that our Lord said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil," or a spy? I am asked, "Do you not think that before Judas was tempted to betray Christ he loved him?" I reply, perhaps the kindness of our Lord's disposition, and the many merciful miracles he wrought, may have occasionally called into exercise the natural affection of Judas: but that he perceived him to be the Messiah, and loved him as the Son of God, the Saviour of men, I cannot for a moment believe. He was chosen to be an apostle, in accordance with Old Testament Scripture, Psal. lxix.; with Acts i. 16—21: but he was not chosen to life in Christ Jesus, or predestinated to sonship by him: he was called to accompany the Redeemer on earth, and occasionally to be a message-bearer for him; but he was not called with a holy calling according to God's purpose and grace given to his people in Christ before the world was. He was outwardly privileged, but not inwardly sanctified; he was numbered among "the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth." Nor do I think he felt the same indignation as Peter did, when he injudiciously said, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." For what purpose Judas joined the Saviour's little band, it is impossible positively to say; but it was most probably with a view to worldly aggrandizement, conceiving that our Lord was come to set up a temporal kingdom,

and literally to take "the throne of his father David," he joined his party hoping to fill some lucrative office of honour. Peter knew Jesus was the Christ, and loved him sincerely, though at times he manifested both his weakness and his ignorance; yet he could not bear the idea of deserting his Lord, or forsaking his friends, therefore with warmth he exclaimed, "Yet will not I."

You add, "I fear sometimes, I am like Judas." This makes you so much the less like him, shows the disposition of you mind, and if your fears are not inordinate, is but obedience to a Divine command, "Thou standest by faith, be not high-minded, but fear." "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," Rom. xi. 20; Heb. iv. 1. Hundreds now in glory have been tormented by this fear, but it did not keep them out of glory, though it spoiled much of their comfort by the way. But that danger will never hurt you, nor that evil much injure you, of which you are prudently afraid: if fears lead to prayer, and prayer to watchfulness, the result is, Satan is disappointed and the soul is preserved. You have least occasion to fear being that, of which you are prayerfully afraid. In the next lines you tell me, God gives you encouragement occasionally, but because you have not so much comfort as you wish, you are afraid your hope is a false one. Perhaps if you looked after comfort less, you would have more; I am per-

suaded that if our eyes were fixed on the glory of God, and if that was the object of our pursuit, we should neither want evidences of grace, nor comfort in our way. He that hunts for comfort works for self, and serves a bad master; he that seeks the glory of God, labours for God, and shall be rewarded. Psal. xix. 11; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Sam. ii. 30. Our hope is as our faith is; if faith is rooted in the Gospel, and is busied about Divine things, our hope will be strong and clear; but if faith loses her hold of the promises, or is weakened by being taken up with self, the world, or any thing carnal, then hope flags, wavers, and wanes.

But you can see no such character as yourself in the Scripture: suppose you cannot, will this make the promise of God of none effect? Where is it said that if you can find that you are like some one mentioned in the Scripture you shall be saved? At least you are not like Judas by your own confession, for you can see his character in the Scriptures; nor can you be like any of the apostates, formalists, or hypocrites there mentioned; I think you may draw some comfort from that. But if you are a singular character, surely the Lord will get singular glory in saving you, therefore cheer up. But there is too much self about this. Jesus says, and you dare not contradict him, "HIM THAT COMETH, I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT." You *have* come to him, you *are* coming, you *will* come, you are determined you will come, and if you perish you will

die at his feet; but how can you perish, when our Lord says, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away? Scripture says more than once, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, SHALL BE SAVED." You have called, you do, and will call; what is the conclusion? you must be saved. I remember once, I was exceedingly depressed in mind, I was going to visit a dying believer prior to going into the country to preach, I thought perhaps I shall see her no more upon earth, but I shall meet her in heaven. In a moment the suggestion was thrown into my soul, "IF *you should be there.*" I felt a gloom, a darkness, I was distressed; I thought, ah, IF I should be there, but if not . . . ! I immediately turned in my mind to the book of God, I thought of the two passages just quoted, John vi. 37; Rom. x. 13. I considered, "*no wise cast out,*" "*shall be saved!*" Why I have been to Jesus, I have called on the Lord. But the enemy suggested, "You did not go aright, you called wrong." Go aright? why I went as a sinner, I called for what God had promised: but I'll go again, I'll go now; I thought, I shall remember those texts at the day of judgment, I shall remember I went to Jesus, called on the Lord, and the Lord will remember it too; how then can I be condemned? The snare was broken, darkness fled, and my confidence in a faithful God was established. I have been many times reduced by sin, temptation, and the workings of my corrupt nature to this; but blessed

be God I have been enabled to hold fast the faithful word of God, and in this I often take comfort.

> What Christ has said must be fulfill'd,
> On this firm rock believers build;
> His truth must stand, his word prevail,
> And not one jot, one tittle fail.

I do not suppose Magdalene sinned as formerly, after her pardon had been pronounced by the lips of Jesus, nor did any others who received a like favour; *nor do you.* Your heart is the seat of every rebellious principle, which principles are continually striving for the mastery; Satan himself does not possess worse evils in his nature, than you do in yours, than I do in mine; but then we at the same time are possessed of opposite principles: the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that we cannot do the things that we would. Gal. v. 17; Rom. vii. 14—25. These two opposite natures inhabit the same soul, act upon the same faculties, and are often both in action at the same time; this makes it very difficult to distinguish what it is that influences us, or to come to a just conclusion. "What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." Song vi. 13. Two friends, or two relatives, or two families of sociable dispositions, may dwell comfortably together in the same house; but two different natures, two sworn foes, two active

determined enemies, cannot; and this is the case in the Christian. Nature and grace, the new man and the old, are as opposite as light and darkness, truth and falsehood, enmity and love; both are vigorous, active, and determined; and hence the unceasing warfare. Sin may gain a temporary advantage, and Satan may suggest many falsehoods upon the subject, but sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law but under favour. Rom. vi. 14. The strength of sin is the law, but we are delivered from it. Rom. vii. 4—6. We are married to Jesus, and he will make us more than conquerors. Rom. viii. 37. To be kept from outward sins, while we feel the powerful workings of inbred corruption, is a great mercy; to possess a nature that would lead into all sin, and yet to be preserved from the actual commission of sin, shows the love, power, and faithfulness of our heavenly Father, and will warrant the inference of the Psalmist; "By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." Psal. xli. 11.

I think you speak incorrectly when you say, "My foes at present are mightiest." If your inward foes were mightiest you would be a prodigy of iniquity; Satan would so work upon your corrupt heart, in consequence of your former attachment to Jesus, and forsaking his service, that you would be a visible epistle of the devil; or to use Scriptural language, he would take to himself seven other spirits worse than

the first, and they would enter your heart and dwell there, and your last state would be worse than the first. Matt. xii. 45. Satan may tempt, your heart may oppose all that is good, and you may seem to be carried away with one wind of temptation after another, but, like a feather fastened to a rock, your safety is not affected. Comfort and safety are separable. Your fears are all groundless, and your misgivings sinful. God is faithful: no temptation hath taken you but *such as is common to men*, and the Lord will make a way for your escape. 1 Cor. x. 13. "Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation: for when *he is tried* he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Jam. i. 12.

But I must conclude. Never dwell upon your miseries, but upon your mercies. Never indulge the idea that you are singular, it is founded either in pride or unbelief. Remember the blood of Christ is of infinite efficacy, it cleanseth from all sin. No praying soul ever perished: no willing soul was ever eventually denied the salvation it desired! God may delay, but he will not deny! You must suffer in the flesh as a sinner, but are justified in the spirit as a believer. Simple faith is the evidence that you are entitled to all covenant blessings. God delights to give to beggars, but will not trade with the self-righteous. Your feelings will vary, but the word of promise is unchangeably the same; you have always one plea left to use at God's throne the name of Jesus; and to pleading

that name the promise is made, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it." John xiv. 14. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." John xvi. 23. The blessing sought is certain, but when you shall enjoy it uncertain; the former is founded on divine faithfulness, the latter is guided by infinite wisdom; God will give you, because he is faithful; he will give it you in the best time, because he is wise! Ever remember that God in his word speaks to sinners; that he invites us to come and receive that we may be holy, but never bids us be holy to entitle us to receive. No case can be too bad for our Physician; there are no denials at the hospital of free grace; none can go beyond God's uttermost; he is as willing to save as he is able, therefore you may trust in him at all times. Psal. lxii. 8. If you derive any light or comfort from this reply, give God the praise.

Come, Jesus, come, my heart inspire,
  Wisdom and power of God appear,
Kindle the pure celestial fire,
  Be thou my life eternal here:
The Way, the Truth, the Life Divine,
  Each moment thee I long to prove,
Each moment to receive of thine,
  Each moment feel, that God is love.

THE WILFUL SIN.

A REPLY TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS, ON HEBREWS X. 26, 27. *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*

BELOVED IN THE LORD JESUS,

It is a great mercy for the Church of God, that she possesses the Word of God; and is also promised the Spirit of God to lead into a knowledge of its contents. God's book is a God-like book, there is something of infinity about it. I conceive that no man can fully comprehend its contents, or reconcile all its statements. It is given us as a light, to instruct, direct, and cheer us in this gloomy wilderness of woe. It is to be received with reverence, to be believed with implicit faith, and to be obeyed with cheerfulness and gratitude. The Epistle to the Hebrews, was written to Jews who professed the Lord Jesus Christ; they were exposed to persecution, excommunication, and great trials from their countrymen and others. The apostle writes to them in order to instruct, confirm, caution, encourage, comfort, and exhort them. He sets before them the divinity of our Lord's person;

his apostleship; his priesthood; and shows him to be the sum and substance of the old dispensation. He points out our obligations in reference to the Gospel, the nature and consequences of unbelief, the superior privileges we enjoy, and exhorts to a variety of duties, especially steadfastness in the faith. Toward the close of the tenth chapter he cautions them against neglecting public ordinances, to which no doubt they were tempted, in consequence of the persecution they suffered; he intimates that neglect of ordinances is the first step to apostacy, and therefore bids them exhort one another to a diligent attendance on them. Then come the verses you refer to, "For if we sin wilfully," &c. By the truth in these verses I understand the truth respecting the divinity, messiahship, priesthood, sacrifice, atonement, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Or that Jesus Christ was really what he professed to be, and what his apostles proclaimed him to be. They had preached this truth to the people; the Holy Ghost had confirmed the same by miracles, wonders, and signs; and they received it, and professed Christ accordingly. They were in consequence exposed to the bitter rage and determined opposition of their carnal connexions; they were stripped of their goods, cast out of the synagogue, and suffered the loss of all things. These things are bad at first, but their continuance is worse; the intention was to lead them to apostacy, and therefore the apostle especially cautions them against that.

By sinning wilfully, I understand the wilful rejection of the truth of God in consequence of persecution; or a rejection of Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. They had been convinced he was this; they professed the same; they had suffered on account of it; but now the apostle assures them if they deny him after such convictions and professions, and join with the Jews in counting him an impostor, and treating his Gospel as an imposition, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, &c. God will not pardon without a sacrifice; the old ceremonial economy is abolished; and if Christ be rejected there is no other sacrifice; consequently there can be no pardon, or hope, or salvation. The Son of God is treated with the greatest indignity, trodden under foot; his blood is counted as no better than the blood of a common malefactor; contempt is poured upon the Spirit of grace, who witnessed to his divinity and messiahship by miracles and signs; and now there remaineth only a certain, fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the ADVERSARIES. The Law of Moses the servant, punished presumption with death; the Gospel of Christ punishes the apostate with eternal damnation. Mercy is scorned, grace is despised, justice is insulted, and God will take vengeance; "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But I look at the questions separately; "Is any particular sin implied in the words If we sin

wilfully?" Yes, apostacy from Christ: a *drawing back* to perdition: a giving up the confidence, that Jesus was really and truly that Prophet who should come into the world. It is called a falling away, a crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame. Such persons being persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, yet nevertheless through fear (Rev. xxi. 8), love of the present life, or other carnal motives, wilfully deny him, join with his enemies, and are doomed to darkness, death, and black despair. "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John xv. 6, with Matt. xiii. 41, 42. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "Thou standest by faith, be not highminded but fear:" for if God spared not the *natural branches*, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 1 Cor. x. 12; Rom. xi. 20, 21; Heb. iv. 1; iii. 12, 13.

"Do the words, Knowledge of the truth, imply a bare reception of the truth literally and not spiritually?" All professors receive the truth into the head, but in some it sinks down into the heart; when it gets into the heart it produces lasting effects. The Holy Spirit enlightens the mind and it sees the glory, majesty, suitability, and excellency of the truth; faith springs up and embraces it, and it now becomes an instrument of sanctification. Every faculty of the soul becomes affected by it, the memory finds a place

for it and hides it; the understanding is illuminated by it; the affections are set on the great Object it presents; the will is regulated by it; and the conscience becomes instructed and tender. The man obeys from the heart the form of doctrine which is delivered to him. He beholds as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. Rom. vi. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 18. He feels what David utters, "O how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day!" Such a one will not fall away, or wilfully deny Christ. But others are convinced of the truth of the doctrines, who never see their glory; they are affected with them, but not sanctified by them; they embrace them, but are not united to them; they find a place in the mind, but have not *a home* in the soul. See Heb. vi. 4—8; iv. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 13; Jam. i. 21; John xv. 5—11. Such may sin wilfully, and deny the Saviour who is above. Spiritual knowledge, makes a man humble, watchful, prayerful, and dependent on his God; these preserve him. Natural knowledge of spiritual things, makes a man proud, self-sufficient, careless, and often imprudent; consequently it may be expected he will fall. We can only tell the *nature* of the knowledge we possess by its effects or fruits; therefore we should be diligent that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2 Pet. iii. 14; 1 John ii. 28; Rev. xvi. 15; 1 John ii. 4, 5; Rev. xxii. 14.

"Have those words reference to the whole

truth, so far as God as revealed, or only to truth partially?" All truth is sacred, we are bound to receive all God has revealed; we are not at liberty to reject any one portion of God's book. Our understandings should be entirely subjected to the Word of God. We ought to receive it without asking, why? or disputing about its importance. But the truth referred to by the apostle I conceive is, the truth of the Redeemer's profession, word, and work. He professed to be the Christ, the Son of the living God: that his word was the word of God; and that his work is our salvation. If these be denied, salvation cannot be enjoyed: for there is salvation in no other; for there is none other name given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts iv. 12. He is Jehovah, and beside him there is no Saviour. Isa. xliii. 11.

"Can none be the children of God who are only partially endowed with the light or knowledge of divine truth?" It is impossible to say with how little knowledge a person may be saved: or how much error may remain in a sanctified mind. A man must know himself as a sinner, and the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour, in order to salvation; but I am not sure that any thing further is absolutely necessary. The dying thief had not much knowledge, but he was saved. There are doubtless thousands in glory, who while on earth had but very little knowledge of the great and glorious doctrines of the everlasting Gospel. They knew Jesus; they found him

to be precious; they trusted their souls in his hands; they depended on his one sacrifice; they slipped through the world, and out of time, almost unobserved, and were introduced into his presence and glory. But *who is* more than partially endowed with the knowledge of divine truth? According to my apprehension, it would require an infinite intellect to grasp all the truth God has revealed; Paul only knew in part, he prophesied in part, and waited for further discoveries of the truth to his mind. 1 Cor. xiii. 9—13; Phil. iii. 10.

"Do not the children of God sin wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth?" Yes, to their shame, sorrow, and confusion, they do. Most of our sins, are in a sense wilful sins: we are not dragged to sin against our will, but our wills under the influence of the depraved principles which are in our nature, go forth in the commission of sins. But then we are checked, hindered, and condemned in the commission, by grace which dwells in us. 1 John iii. 20, 21. Nothing can be more dangerous, than for a person to presume to sin, because he believes sin cannot damn him; yet a believer may be tempted to this, yea, and at times is tempted to it. But he trembles at the idea,—exclaims, God forbid! Turns to the throne of grace and prays, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the GREAT TRANSGRESSION." Psal. xix. 13; with

1 John v. 16, 17. None have more reason to make sure of the GREATER DAMNATION, than those who live in sin assuring themselves of salvation. If our religion does not lead us to hate sin, fear sin, forsake sin, and pant for freedom from sin, it is not the religion of Christ, but we are under a most awful delusion. When a believer has been guilty of wilful sin, he feels condemned, is distressed, and cast down: and before he can recover his former standing, he is led to aggravate his sin in reflecting upon it; he condemns himself, rejecting all vain excuses; humbly confesses it before God; loathes and abhors himself in his own sight on account of it; and when he obtains a pardon, is more watchful, doubly jealous of himself, and earnest with God to keep him in future. He that makes excuses, or accepts excuses for his sins, is in a doubtful state: he is very different to Peter who went out and wept bitterly; or to David whose experience you read in the fifty-first Psalm. "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." Psal. iv. 4. Beware how you walk on the margin of your liberty. "Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Gal. v. 13.

Observe, 1. Timid, fearful, doubting believers, are not at present in danger of committing this wilful sin. Satan may misrepresent the truth, bring charges against them, and fill their consciences with terror and alarm; but they are

innocent of this great transgression. They still desire to love Jesus, they believe he is the Saviour of the guilty and undone, and they would give a world if they could claim him, ardently love him, and like glorified spirits adore him. They look at his word, think of his grace, flee to his cross, and plaintively cry,

> But speak, my Lord, and calm my fear,
> Am I not safe beneath thy shade?
> Thy vengeance will not strike me here,
> Nor Satan dares my soul invade.

Yes, my poor brother, thou art safe at the cross of Jesus; he does speak to thee and says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." His heart yearns over thee with indescribable pity, compassion, and love; and he directs you to his word for comfort, peace, and joy: he spake it, and caused it to be written that you might have his joy fulfilled in you. John xvii. 13; 1 John i. 4; v. 13. He knows your infirmities, pities your weaknesses, and will be merciful to you as he is used to be to those who fear his name. So long as you fear to offend him, pant to enjoy him, long to be with him, pray to be like him; there is no fear of your rejecting his claims, denying his messiahship, joining the camp of his enemies, and blaspheming his dear name: consequently there is nothing in these fearful verses to terrify you.

2. The vain confident, trifling, and incautious

professor is in the greatest danger on this subject: therefore "blessed is the man that feareth alway." The man who concludes he is safe, and shrouds himself in his sound creed and lofty notions, is a pitiable character; if God leave him to his vanity he is sure of broken bones, if not of a broken neck. The trifler, who can trifle with God's word, treating it as though it was the word of man, as though it was submitted to his revision, and may be re-moulded by his fancy, is in a most dangerous state. O, I tremble for some, whom I see taking such daring liberties with God's Book; they act as though they were at liberty to reject, what they do not approve; to pervert, what does not accord with their notions, or fall in with their creed; to wrest the plain meaning of words to suit their fancies. Indeed I fear that many of us have taken very undue liberties with the holy Scriptures; we have not read them under the impression that they were God's writings, and would judge us at the last day. John xii. 48. We have not realized sufficiently our own ignorance and liability to err, nor our absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit to unfold their meaning. Here I would just drop a word to young Christians, especially to young men who are conceiving God intends them for preachers of his holy word: my brethren, beware how you treat God's book, never take your creed to it, but derive your creed from it; admit that the Scriptures are wiser than you are. I often grieve over the manner in which I have treated

the Scriptures in years that are past; I admire the goodness and forbearance of my God toward me; and in love I would say to all my brethren, the Bible brings with it an awful responsibility, let us be serious, prayerful, childlike learners, whenever we turn over the sacred pages. There is such a thing as wresting the Scriptures to our own destruction, 2 Pet. iii. 16, 17: and also to the injury of others, many have been stripped of their simplicity, tenderness of conscience, and holy fear of sin, through connexion with those who have wrested the Scriptures: others have been robbed of their confidence, comfort, and joys: and some have been drowned in destruction and perdition. 2 Pet. ii.; Jude; 1 Tim. vi. 9.

3. The passage we have been considering was intended to stir up professors to diligence in attending ordinances, how many neglect them as though they were not of divine institution, or of real importance. It was designed to prompt them to perseverance in the path of tribulation, sometimes we are allured by prospects, Heb. xii. 1, 2; sometimes exhorted on the ground of obligation, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; and sometimes urged from the idea of danger, as here, and elsewhere. How solemn, how awful, how startling the words of the Holy Ghost by Peter, which will fill up my paper: "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world *through the knowledge of the* Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *they are again entangled*, and *overcome*; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning! For it had been

better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, *to turn from the holy commandment* delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb! The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire!"

THOUGHTS ON HEBREWS II. 9.

That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

THAT the Lord Jesus Christ came to save his people from their sins, to redeem them from all iniquity, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory, is an acknowledged fact; but it is not generally acknowledged that they alone are interested in his redeeming work. Many conclude that his blood was shed for them who perish, *as much* as for them who are saved; and they draw this conclusion from many general expressions which are found in the word of God, when this subject is spoken of, especially from the text we are now about to look at; "That he, by the grace of God, should taste death *for every man.*" It should be known that the substantive *man*, is not in the original at all, but is supplied by the translators, the context must explain or

set forth the extent of the meaning of the term, it was for every *son*, ver. 10, every one of the *sanctified* (Heb. x. 14), the *brethren* of Christ, ver. 11, the *children* God gave the Messiah, ver. 13, 14. We must not be led away by sound, but seek for the sense.

How is the phrase, *every man*, used in other portions of Scripture? We will look at one or two. Luke xvi. 16. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and *every man* presseth into it." Did the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers press into it? They were men. Did the heathen nations press into it who had never heard of it? They also were men. The meaning must be that many, a multitude pressed in, not every individual man, or all men. 1 Cor. xii. 7. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every man*, yet there are many who have never heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. Col. i. 23. The Gospel was preached to *every creature which is under heaven*, and yet it is notorious that there were thousands at that time who had never heard the Gospel. If there had been such an expression as this used in reference to redemption, many would have looked at it as decisive, and would have considered any attempt to confine it *to some only*, to have been awfully presumptuous; and yet it cannot mean every rational creature, but only a great multitude, or people of almost every nation. Rev. v. 13. Can every creature here mean, every distinct rational being inhabiting those

places? Assuredly not. Let us not then be led away by general expressions, but let us search, compare, and examine the word of God in humility, with prayer and perseverance.

The Father's act of election fixes the extent and number of the Church, the Son's redemption delivers that Church from wrath, and the Spirit's operations prepare that Church for glory. The Father chooses, predestinates, and gives; the Son receives, redeems, and claims; the Spirit quickens, teaches, and sanctifies; and by the joint working of the GLORIOUS TRINITY, the Church is saved with an everlasting salvation. The speaking blood of Immanuel will never cease to cry, until all for whom it was shed are brought to enjoy the blessings it procured; nor will Jesus see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, until all his redeemed people are with him associated, identified, and glorified. He tasted death for them, that they might never die, and he will lead them to glory as the great Captain of their salvation. The triumphs of his cross shall be celebrated around his throne, by each and every one for whom he suffered, bled, and conquered. The purchase of his blood shall never be stolen, forfeited, or lost; impartial justice will see that all be sent out of the pit, and omnipotent mercy shall guide them to glory. The blood that purchased shall cleanse all whom it bought, and none who are cleansed shall sink into perdition.

"But what encouragement has a sinner, *as such*, to come to Christ, if this is the truth?"

Every encouragement. The Father invites him. Jesus is pledged to receive him. The promises are made to him, and his very coming, being the effect of the Spirit's teaching, is the evidence of his interest in all the blessings of redemption. We are not invited to come to Christ as "the elect," or as "the redeemed," but simply as sinners. Every sinner to whom the Gospel comes is invited. Every one who comes is received. Every one who is thus received has been redeemed. For no man will come to Jesus except the Father draw him. The particularity of redemption excludes no man from Christ, but it secures the certain salvation of all for whom he engaged as a Surety, for whom he suffered as a Substitute, and for whom he died as a Sacrifice. He is the one propitiation for the whole world, there is no other. His blood is the one atonement for human guilt, there is no other. The Gospel warrants any soul to build upon that atonement for eternal life, and every man, woman, or child who does so, is delivered from the wrath to come. Jesus is the one, alone, and all-sufficient Saviour. He invites sinners, *as such*, without distinction to come to him for life and everlasting salvation, he pledges his word that he will never refuse one, he has solemnly kept his word until the present moment, and he ever will; is not this encouragement enough for any one, for every one, who desires to be saved by him? "But if Christ did not represent me, if he was not my Substitute." Such suggestions

come from Satan, and if you take any other view of truth, similar discouraging suggestions will be presented to your mind. The fact is, that *as a sinner*, you have nothing to do with God's election, or with the particularity of Christ's redemption, all you have to do with, is the assurance that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, that he is able to save unto the uttermost, and that he invites you, *as a sinner*, to come and be saved by him. Difficulties may be removed from one point to another, or one difficulty may be exchanged for another; but difficulties you will find until you simply take God's word as it is addressed to you in the everlasting Gospel, and act upon it. If you seriously desire to be saved, the Lord Jesus is both able and willing to save you; but if you are disposed to cavil at the revelation God has given, you will find plenty to cavil at, and may perish in so doing. Salvation flows from the Father's love, through the Son's blood, by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit; it embraces the whole Church, which never has formed more than part of the world, nor never will, until Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation. The former part of this statement is an historical fact which cannot be questioned, and the latter appears to me to be most clearly revealed in God's most holy word.

Reader, do you wish to be saved? Are you willing to be saved as a poor sinner by free grace alone? If so, the Lord Jesus is both able and

willing to save you. You are one of them for whom he tasted death, one of them whose sins he bare in his own body on the tree. Listen not to the sly suggestions of Satan. Pay no attention to man's quibbles at God's word. Perplex not your mind by any nice distinctions made by man, but come at once to Jesus. Come expecting him to receive you. Come relying on his hearty invitation. Come to prove the truth of his precious promises. Come and cast yourself upon his veracity, merit, and mercy, and eternal life is yours. Greater encouragement you could not have than is already given. When you have been received by Jesus, when you enjoy salvation, then you will be able to trace out the work of the Holy Spirit within you, to realize your personal interest in the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus, and to see that your present blessedness and future prospects, flow alike from the free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace of the Father. Then you may enjoy your election of God. Then you may rejoice in Jesus as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And then you will realize that the work of the Holy Spirit *alone*, distinguishes man from man, and makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. All that is spiritually good *must* be traced up to God's free grace, and all moral evil, to man's free will.

O glorious Redeemer! I review thy redeeming work with delight, and rejoice in the persuasion, "That all whom the Father gave thee shall come

to thee, and him that cometh thou wilt in no wise cast out!" It is sweet, pleasant, and delightful to see love, blood, and energy united in the salvation of thy people; and to know that the objects of thy Father's love are the members of thy Church, and that only the people of thy choice are the purchase of thy death; that all whom thou hast died for are quickened by thy Spirit, taught to know thy name, love thy person, prize thy Gospel, keep thy ways, observe thy laws, sing thy praises, and shall be thy crown, thy joy, and thy delight for ever. Help me to live in the full persuasion that I am thine, bought by thee, belonging to thee, ordained to glorify thee, and bound to honour thee by every tie of gratitude, duty, and love.

O glorious truth, my Saviour tasted death,
For every son whom God the Father chose;
The' appointed Lamb of God resign'd his breath
For all his brethren, who were then his foes.
The children had partook of flesh and blood,
He comes and is partaker of the same;
Exhibits and displays the grace of God,
In raising them from guilt, and fear, and shame.
As Captain of salvation he appears,
Lower than angels made, to bleed and die;
Honour and glory now Immanuel wears,
And leads his blood-bought army to the sky.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE supper of the Lord is a divine institution. It originated in the wisdom and love of our adorable Redeemer. It is intended to benefit our souls, test our attachment to his cause, and perpetuate the remembrance of his sufferings and death. It is a privilege, intended for every real believer. It is a duty, binding upon every true Christian. We ought to meet together, expressly for the purpose of breaking bread together. We ought frequently to do so. We ought regularly to do so. If our souls are in a healthy state we shall do so. But it is a Church ordinance, and should only be attended to by us as a Church. We should come together into our usual place of meeting for the purpose. We should meet simply as disciples of Jesus. We should meet in a spirit of love, having no wrath, or bitterness, or malice in our hearts against any. We should meet because Jesus commands us, because he sets us the example, because he has promised to meet with us, and because he considers himself honoured by our so meeting.

The elements used are simple bread and wine. The subject presented is the substitutionary sufferings and death of Christ. The end is to bring Christ to our remembrance, to increase mutual love, and to show forth the death of Christ unto others, until he comes. Every Chris-

tian ought to have his place at the Lord's table, and ought regularly to fill that place. But some never attend, and others only occasionally. Various are the excuses which men frame to justify their neglect of this holy ordinance, but such excuses will not bear the light of investigation, or stand in the presence of God. Let us therefore attend to a few particulars, and answer a few inquiries upon this interesting point.

First. What will justify a member of a Christian Church in keeping away from the Lord's table?

1. Not *private quarrels* or *personal dislikes;* seeing the Lord has not made it a condition of coming to his table, that we should all see exactly alike in all things; nor has he left the power to censure in the hands of any private individual, but in his Church, and we know not, but that he himself sat down with Judas, whom he could not love, for he called him a devil. It is for a lamentation that the members of the same church do so often differ, and manifest their dislike, by neglect of ordinances; but let all such remember, their rule is to be found in Matt. xviii. 15—19; and not in their own fancy or temper. Every one of us must give account of himself to God, Rom. xiv. 12, and why we have neglected his ordinances, as well as other things. "But how can I meet at the Lord's table with one against whom I feel enmity in my heart?" By acting upon God's word, and exercising a forgiving spirit, according to the word,

"Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. iv. 32. "But I have been so ill used, I cannot forgive." How then can you expect forgiveness? Has your brother or sister acted worse toward you than you have toward the Lord? Or, have you forgotten his word? "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against ANY: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespassess." Mark xi. 25, 26. Read also with prayer and attention Matt. vi. 14, 15; xviii. 21—35; Luke vi. 37; Col. iii. 13; James ii. 13. Have you read these portions of God's word, and can you still be unforgiving, and keep from God's table on account of it? If so, your case is truly fearful, the Lord awaken and reconvert your soul.

2. *Not any particular frame of mind*, or *state of soul;* because the Lord has not forbidden us to come in one frame, or commanded us to come in another. His words are, "As oft as ye do it, do it in remembrance of me." You are not coming to bring a frame or feeling to God, but to commemorate the love, sorrows, and death of Jesus. We should pray for a holy, solemn, melting frame of soul, but not stay away for the want of it. Sometimes the Lord meets us, when at his table, while mourning over such a state, and softens, humbles, and feeds our souls with heavenly manna. No frame of mind should keep

us from using ordinances, and if we allow ourselves to neglect ordinances on account of frames, we must expect that Satan will labour to bring us into such frames, just before ordinance times arrive. Therefore, if you would not tempt Satan to endeavour to bring you into such God-dishonouring, soul-distressing frames, never neglect ordinances on account of them.

3. *Not the want of preparation;* seeing no preparation is prescribed in the word of God, only an examination, whether we are in the faith; and this the Christian should be often attending to, that he may be fully assured. It is true, meditation, prayer, and reading the holy Scriptures are excellent helps, and should always precede attendance on this, and all ordinances, if opportunity be afforded; but if no opportunity offers, we are not justified in abstaining from ordinances for the want of the same. Come to ordinances as you first came to Christ, and you cannot come wrong, and will seldom come in vain.

4. *Not a fear of receiving unworthily*, because this may be prevented by prayer. Besides, on this principle, if we carry it as far as Satan would have us, we should abstain from every duty, and neglect all ordinances. He that comes to the Lord's table, desiring and praying to see, feed on, and enjoy Jesus, will not eat or drink unworthily. He that is most sensible of his sins, and utter undeservings, is the most welcome guest at the Lord's supper.

5. *Not a want of inclination;* seeing this arises from the old man which is to be put off, from sin which is to be opposed, from Satan, to whom we are not to give place; but whom God commands us to resist, steadfast in the faith. If inclination is to guide at all, then let it guide in all, and then farewell Bible reading, farewell meditation, farewell social prayer meetings, farewell hearing the word, farewell all that I now attend to, from a sense of duty, or with a hope to enjoy my Lord.

6. *Not every, or any excuse which is presented to the mind;* for if we attend to these, Satan will supply us with plenty, and we shall soon be like those spoken of by Jesus. Luke xiv. 16—25. But we are not ignorant of his devices, any thing that will displease, or dishonour Jesus, feed the flesh, grieve the Spirit, and vex the saint he will forward; but all that is opposite, he will oppose to the uttermost, and find plenty of reasons, and excuses, why we should neglect and forsake such things. Be ye not unwise, but understanding ing what the will of the Lord is. But,—

1. *Being unavoidably detained at home, in servitude, by affliction, or family duties;* prayer having been used, opportunity sought, and no way found. The Lord's ordinances were never designed to lead us to neglect any moral duties; positive institutions and moral precepts help each other, but never run counter to one another; therefore, he who cannot attend ordinances without committing positive sin in coming, is justified in staying away.

2. *Being prohibited by the church for sin;* if that prohibition be according to the word of God and command of Christ. The believer who has fallen into sin, and is under the censure of the church, should not attempt to attend to his ordinance, until that censure be removed, unless the church acts unscripturally severe.

3. *Being positively commanded by Christ not to come;* but then such command must be found written in the word. His word is "COME," not stay away; except you are walking disorderly, and then he says to your brethren, *with such a one, do not eat.*"

4. *Being satisfied from God's word, and our own consciences, that we are haters of Christ, hypocrites in heart, and enemies to God.* But then, with such convictions we should not be in a church, except they spring from the power of temptation, and then we should seek to be rightly informed on the subject, and mercifully delivered from the snare.

5. *Being independent of Christ*, and under no obligation to love, respect, or obey him; being delivered and set free, from his light burden and easy yoke. But none will pretend to this, and therefore, cannot be justified in their neglect, on account of it.

A second inquiry. What does neglecting the ordinances of the Lord's Supper, by a member of a Christian Church, who has, or may have opportunity to attend it, appear to imply?

1. *That he is wiser than Jesus;* who instituted

it, and commanded his people to attend to it. Immanuel saw it necessary, and therefore commanded it; he sees it to be unnecessary, and therefore neglects it. What an awful sin is this, and yet how many professors are guilty of it Lord, humble thy people, and deliver them.

2. *That he is tired of Christ, and finds his ordinances wearisome.* He is afraid of being too much in the company of Jesus, or of remembering his sorrows, and thinking of his love too often. O Christian, did you ever conceive that your wilful neglecting of the Lord's ordinances appeared to imply this? But whether you conceive it or not, so it most evidently does. Let not Satan make excuses for you, but bare your consciences and receive the stroke; it is the wound of a friend who is faithful, and which the blood of atonement will heal.

3. *That he has no regard to the commands of Christ, or concern for his positive institutions.* That though he wishes to be saved by Jesus, he has really no love to him, nor desire to obey him. But what can we think of those who wish to divide the doctrines and duties, the promises and commands of Jesus? Are they wise? Are they holy? Are they humble? Are they like the primitive believers? Surely they are not. But how many are there who profess doctrinally to hold these things in union, yet practically divide them? and he who neglects the holy supper doth so.

4. *That he centres in self,* and is only seeking

his own gratification, and studying his own feelings. O how many are there whose conduct says, that their religion is self—self—self. They are able to do without Christ, or nearly so; they are rich and have made their fortunes; and know not that they are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. They come not to ordinances to seek supplies from him, because they have a stock of their own; and the conduct of many of whom we hope better things, appears to imply that they are infected in a measure with this fearful disease.

5. *That he rejects the Scriptures,* and substitutes his own fancies, or something worse, in their stead.

6. *That he does not care whether Jesus Christ has any to remember him as he desired, or no.* What a fearful state is this to be in; and what just cause for mourning that the conduct of many professed lovers of Jesus seems to say as much as this.

A third inquiry. What does keeping from the Lord's table, without a just cause, openly manifest?

1. *Unkindness towards the Lord Jesus.* And can it be that the Lord's people can manifest unkindness to Jesus, who has shown much boundless, inconceivable, an astonishing love to them? Yes, alas! it is possible. If Jesus had thought of us, or acted toward us as we think and act toward him, where and what should we now be? Where and what should we be for ever? Think

of this, negligent Christian, and be zealous henceforth and repent. Rev. iii. 19.

2. *Hardness of heart and contempt of his holy Gospel.* If the heart was not lamentably hard, the Gospel could not be contemned; and if the Gospel was not contemned, the ordinance of the supper could not be thus neglected.

3. *Indifference respecting our personal prosperity, and our evidence of being the friends of Christ.* John xv. 14.

4. *We are expecting what the Scriptures do not warrant us to look for*, viz. that every thing should be just as we wish, which must be wrong, if it was so, we being ignorant, sinful, selfish creatures; beside every one would wish to have it his way, and almost every one different from the other.

5. *There is not sufficient concern for the honour of Christ*, whom we profess to love, reverence, and serve. Did we feel sufficiently for his honour, thousands of little difficulties would be surmounted, which now appear insurmountable barriers. Then should we run in the way of his commandments, for it would enlarge our hearts.

6. There is *a want of love* to the church, the officers and head of the same. If we loved the church sincerely and tenderly, we should be careful of grieving its members or officers, much more its head. Love brings together and keeps together; it is want of love that is the cause of most of our dissensions and divisions: did we love Jesus, his Church, and our own souls more,

we should be more diligent in observing his righteous and soul-profitting commands.

A fourth inquiry. What is neglecting the Lord's Supper likely to produce?

1. *Barrenness under other ordinances.* Christ being dishonoured and the Spirit grieved, what can a Christian expect but barrenness then? Surely it is of importance to inquire when experiencing barrenness of soul, What is the cause? What is the occasion of this? And if there be an allowed neglect of any duty, surely we need not look farther to find a reason.

2. *Deadness of soul,* in prayer, reading the word, hearing the Gospel, and Christian conversation.

3. A *sensible distance from God,* and *want of communion in prayer;* shyness at the throne, and a painful withholding divine communications which were formerly enjoyed; and what is religion without these?

4. *Doubts, fears,* and *suspicions* arising in the mind in reference to our real state before God, and a want of confidence, peace, and joy in God, as our covenant Father and Friend.

5. An *increase of carnality, coldness, darkness, lukewarmness,* and *indifference in the ways of God.*

6. It will procure the *rebukes of the Spirit in the conscience,* the visible disapprobation of God, and the laying on of the rod of correction.

Fifthly. A few serious considerations pro-

posed to those who live in the neglect of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

1. Can you justify your conduct before God upon the principles laid down in your Bibles?

2. Are you manifesting a Christian spirit? Is there any meekness, love, longsuffering, forbearance, tenderness, brotherly kindness, forgiveness, charity, and spirituality manifested in your so acting?

3. Are you following after peace and the things whereby one may edify another?

4. Are you an obedient child, attending to the exhortation of the Holy Ghost, by Peter, "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy?" 1 Peter i. 14—16.

5. Does your conduct proceed from being spiritually minded, or carnally minded? Read Rom. viii. 5—9.

6. Do you think you shall reflect on such conduct with pleasure on a sick bed, or a dying pillow, in the prospect of standing before God and an awful eternity? Remember the words of the Holy Ghost, which were addressed to the church at Rome, are of importance; they are truths, not fancies; "Every one must give an account of himself to God." Rom. xiv. 12. See also to the same purpose, Matt. xii. 36; xvi. 27; xviii. 23—35; 2 Cor. v. 10.

Let it not be supposed that I attach an undue importance to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, or superstitiously think that it confers grace; for this is not the case. But Jesus has instituted it, and positively enjoined it on his people to attend to the same. When we join a church of Christ, we profess to have respect to all his commands, and to wish to walk in them; the conduct referred to is a violation of that engagement, and a practical disregard of the Saviour's word. If obedience honours our reigning Immanuel, then disobedience dishonours him; and has he not said, "They that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed?" Are these words acted upon by Jesus? or are they only written to amuse or frighten us? Assuredly they are acted upon; then I am correct in what I have written. I say not that this is the *only thing* that produces the effects spoken of above; but it is *one of the things* for which our holy Father thus corrects us. But I close these remarks in the words of Hart;

> Despise not those who would you warn,
> Remember this is true,
> He that his duty will not learn,
> His duty will not do.

Consider these things, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

A LETTER TO YOU

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WILL you excuse the liberty, which a desire to spread the knowledge of the Saviour, and to benefit your immortal soul, have led me to take in thus addressing you. We are exhorted in the divine word, to "watch for souls," and to "preach the Gospel to every creature." That Gospel, is good news sent direct from God's loving heart to us. It informs us that we are lost sinners, that we need a Saviour, that God has provided the very Saviour we need, that the Lord Jesus has obeyed the holy law, and offered an infinitely meritorious sacrifice to divine justice for our sins, and is now both able and willing, to save all that "come unto God by him." The salvation which is in Christ Jesus, is just what *you* need. It comprises, a righteousness which will justify your person, grace which will sanctify your nature, and a title to everlasting life. But this salvation will never be received or enjoyed by any person, until convinced of sin, concerned to escape from the wrath of God, and made heartily willing to be saved in God's own way. We shall never put on the righteousness of Jesus, until we have put off our own. We shall never wash our souls in the fountain which he has opened for sin and uncleanness, until we discover that we are filthy in God's sight, and

loathsome in our own. He shall never accept the free pardon which is offered us, until we realize that we are guilty and exposed to eternal death. Nor shall we ever seek the Holy Spirit which is promised, to produce in us that holiness, without which no one can see the Lord, until we feel our need of his gracious influences, and desire to experience his sanctifying operations.

Now, as religion is a great reality, as it is something "known and felt," will you allow me very affectionately to ask, Have you ever experienced it? Have you sought and obtained the pardon of all your sins? Have you renounced your own righteousness, that you may depend on, and be found in, the righteousness of Christ? Have you pleaded with God, that he would give you his Holy Spirit? and have you "received the Holy Ghost?" Do you understand the Scriptures, when they speak of "passing from death unto life?" Of "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God* which liveth and abideth for ever?" Of "receiving the atonement?" Of being "in Christ Jesus?" Of Christ "living in us?" Of "living in the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit?" Of "dwelling in God," and "God dwelling in us?" Many persons fancy that they are religious, and consequently safe for eternity, without knowing any thing of these things. They mistake the "form of godliness," for "the power." They are satisfied with "a name to live, while they are dead." Is it possible that this may be your

case? Is there any doubt upon the point? Would it not be well to examine the matter closely? The Apostle says, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, know ye not how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" This is very solemn language, and it should be carefully attended to. A mistake on such a subject is most fearful, it may be corrected now, but if we die under such a mistake, it can never be corrected. Once lost, we are lost for ever; and if we should be lost, through neglecting the great salvation; or through taking it for granted that we are safe, without thorough investigation; it will be sad, very sad. Multitudes, it is to be feared, are just in this case. If *you* should be? If *you* should *die* in this state? The bare supposition is dreadful. And yet it is possible. I beseech you therefore to examine into the matter, and to do so *at once*. There is no time for delay. There is no reason for delaying the matter for one day—one hour. Ask your conscience then with all seriousness, as in the presence, and beneath the eye of God, who searcheth the heart—Have I been thoroughly convinced of my lost and ruined state, as a sinner before God? Have I confessed my sins before God in private, and pleaded for the pardon of them in the name of, and on the ground of the atonement made by, his beloved Son? Have I obtained peace with God through the blood of his cross? Is my nature renewed by the Holy Spirit? and do I thirst, pant, and pray to be made holy, because God is holy? Do

I hate sin? Do I live above the world? Do I walk with God? Can I say with the Apostle John, "Truly my fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ?" These are deeply important inquiries. They enter into the very vitals of real religion. We must know something of their meaning, and that experimentally, if we are true Christians. If they are strange things to us, then we are strangers to God. We are destitute of true godliness. We are living without God in the world. And if we presume that we are safe, while we are strangers to the pardon of sin, peace with God, or evangelical holiness; there can be little ground to question whether the god of this world has not blinded our minds. And lest this should be the case, to prevent the possibility of it—from a pure desire for your present and everlasting welfare, these few lines are addressed to you. But, if you really worship God in the Spirit, if you rejoice in Christ Jesus, if you have no confidence in the flesh, if you walk with God in peace and holy fellowship, then we joy and rejoice with you, and bless God on your behalf. You are in Christ, and it is both your privilege and duty, to unite with us in endeavouring to spread abroad the savour of his knowledge in every place; to place the truth before those who are strangers to it, and endeavour to win them over to the Saviour. Time is flying. Eternity is approaching. We shall soon be summoned to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and be either acquitted,

commended, and rewarded; or (fearful alternative) be condemned, sentenced, and banished from the presence of God. May we "seek the Lord while he may be found," "make our calling and election sure," "laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life." 1 Tim. vi. 19. May the Lord, the Holy Spirit, accompany the reading of these few lines, sent out of love to your soul, and with a view to his glory, with his effectual benediction, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

So prays,
Yours in Christian love.

P.S.—If each Christian that reads this letter, would copy it, and send the copy by post to some person to whom it may appear to be suitable, it may do good. The copies of it may be multiplied thus to any extent, and each sending to their own relations, or acquaintances, it would be sent where otherwise it would never go. Besides which many would read a letter thus sent, who would not read a printed tract. Dear reader, try this

HELP SOUGHT.

Lord, be thou my helper. PSALM XXX. 10.

No man is independent. No man can be. It is the design of God that we should be dependent on one another, and that all should be dependent on himself. Sin has robbed us of our strength, so that we are weak; duties and circumstances require power, so that we are driven to prayer. The Lord is the helper of his people, and he teaches them their need of his help, leads them to his throne to seek it, and then he helps them according to his wisdom and love. Let us not faint, for our God is strong. Let us not be discouraged, for the Lord will strengthen us. Let us not listen to Satan, but repair to his throne: and in the prospect of all our trials, troubles, and afflictions cry, "*Lord, be thou my helper.*"

There is work to be done, and new work. Work that will require skill, energy, and perseverance. Work that will bring honour to God, be a blessing to those about us, and a credit to ourselves. But we are not sufficient of ourselves to do it. If we perform it, it must be in divine strength. If we are willing to do it, heartily engage in it, and cry to the Lord for help; he will strengthen us with strength in our souls. There are foes to be conquered, and if they are not they will conquer us. They are numerous,

powerful, disciplined, and determined. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are in league against us. They combine to destroy us. They will do all they can to injure us. We must overcome them, or they will overcome us. But how can creatures so weak, so inexperienced, so undisciplined, expect to conquer them? Only in the Lord's strength, and under the guidance of the great Captain of our salvation. There are graces to be exercised, and to be exercised on their ligitimate objects. The graces of the Spirit are not given to us merely as ornaments, but for use. Faith must believe God's word, hope must look for God's mercy, love must cleave to Christ's person, humility must lie low before God's throne, patience must wait God's time, courage must face God's foes, and fortitude must stand unmoved in God's ways. Every grace will be called into exercise, and will be found necessary to complete the Christian character, to conquer the Christian's difficulties, and to bring the Christian honourably to the close of his career. The daily cross is to be carried. Every Christian has his cross, his daily cross, and he is required to take it up, and bear it after Jesus. It is often unseen by others, even when felt most severely by himself. Our most painful crosses, are often unknown to any one but God. He has appointed them, he lays them before us, he bids us take them up, and (blessed be his holy name) he promises to help us when we endeavour to bear them patiently in his ways. Trials are to

be endured. These come to prove our principles, to test our character, and to conform us to our beloved Lord. They often come from quarters where we least expected them. David is tried by Absalom, Job by his wife, and Paul by the churches of Galatia. Satan tries us to injure us. Men often try us because they hate us. God tries us to do us good, and because he loves us. Trials come from all quarters, at all seasons, in all possible forms. Every day, often every hour, has its trial. Every grace is tried, but especially our faith. And very often we find that our trials are sharp, piercing, and long continued. The thorn in the flesh, is not soon, or easily extracted. The sin that doth so easily beset us, is not quickly laid aside. Every Christian has his peculiar trial, and we shall all find that there are trials before us, which have not been experienced by us yet. Distance is to be gained. We are not as yet come to the rest, and the inheritance which the Lord our God has promised us. Some of us have far to go, and each of us must make progress. The path before us is not more level, or more easy, than that which we have passed already. Yea, it may be more rough, hilly, and difficult. It must be trodden, if ever Mount Zion is reached by us. Besides which, we are often called into new paths of trial and trouble, and a warning voice is heard saying, "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." All the future is unknown, for we know not what a day may bring forth. We little

expected when we started, what we have met with already; and we shall yet meet with many things which we little anticipate. Ours is a rough and thorny road. It is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom. But if there is so much work to be done, and new work too—if there are so many foes to be conquered—if our graces must be exercised—if the daily cross is to be carried to the end—if trials are to be constantly endured—if the distance before us is to be gained—and if the future is all unknown to us—is there not enough to make us despond, or sit down in despair? No, not if we know our resources, if we are in union with Jesus, and keep the eye steadily fixed on his glory. But there is enough to make us cry, and cry most heartily, "*Lord, be thou my helper.*"

The Lord has said, "*I will help thee,*" and this is just what we need. If the Lord help us, he will give us *strength.* Strength equal to our day. Strength for the conflict, and strength in the conflict. Strength which will enable us to do and suffer all his righteous will. Strength which will make us more than conquerors over all our foes. If God strengthen us nothing short of omnipotence can overcome us. If the Lord help us, he will give us *courage.* Courage to face the foe. Courage to take the field manfully. Courage to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Courage to draw the sword of the Spirit against the old roaring lion. Courage to trample on the world with all its

pleasures and blandishments. Courage to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Courage to look death in the face without fear. Courage to enter into eternity without alarm. If the Lord help us he will give *wisdom*. Wisdom to learn his will. Wisdom to choose his way. Wisdom to manage our trials. Wisdom to employ our talents. Wisdom to exercise our graces. Wisdom to overcome our temptations. Wisdom to make a right use of his holy word. Yea, he will make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. If the Lord help us he will give us *patience*. Patience to do his will. Patience to suffer his pleasure. Patience to wait his time. Patience to stand still and watch his hand. Patience to be silent under the heaviest load. If the Lord help us he will give us *light*. Light to discover our path, when all around is dark. Light to perceive his love, when he turns his hand against us. Light to encourage our hope, when all is discouraging within us. Light which will keep from apostacy, though it may not fill us with joy and peace. If the Lord help us he will give us *perseverance*. For the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger. We shall go from strength to strength, until every one of us in Zion appeareth before God. We shall press toward the mark, for the prize of our high calling which is of God in Christ Jesus. If the Lord help us he will give us *faith*. Faith to trust him where we cannot trace him. Faith

which holds fast the promise, when providence appears to men directly contrary to it. Faith which has Christ for its object, the Gospel for its warrant, God's glory for its aim, and salvation as its end. Faith which gathers strength from weakness—courage from defeat—comfort from sorrow—peace from conflict—and life from death. Well then, may we join with the Psalmist in his prayer, "*Lord, be thou my helper.*"

The appeal is to the Most High. No one can always and efficiently help us but God. The creatures will often say to us as the king of Israel to the woman, "If the Lord do not help thee, whence should I?" They have not what we want, what our circumstances render necessary, what we must have or miserably fail. But all things are possible with God, nothing is too hard for him. Let us therefore turn from every creature to him. Let us direct our prayer unto him and look up. This is to appeal to an old friend. One who has helped us in all times past. Whose help has been well timed. Whose help has been sufficient. Who has promised to help us even to the end. It is to appeal to an almighty agent. To whom all things are not only possible, but easy. Who has all power in heaven and in earth. Who is the omnipresent, as well as the omnipotent Jehovah: and who while he is both the omnipotent and omnipresent God, is our infinitely gracious Father. Our father in Jesus. Who loves us with a father's love, looks upon us with a father's eye, and helps

us with a father's hand. He is the all-sufficient One. He needs no one to co-operate with him. He can do for us, not only all we need; but he can do exceeding and abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Well, well then, may we turn from all his creatures, and in the prospect of all the future, with all its trials, troubles, and perplexities cry out, "*Lord, be thou my helper.*"

Beloved, if God hear our prayer and help us, we shall conquer, we must overcome, no enemy can possibly stand before us. If God help us and we overcome through him, we must give him all the glory. This is but common justice. God will help us if we are his, and as such call upon him in the time of trial, trouble, and danger. We are the Lord's if we look to him, trust in him, and call upon him. If we look to the Lord, he has given us the eye of faith; if we trust in the Lord, he has made himself known to us in the person of his Son, if we call upon him he has put the Spirit of prayer into our hearts. Now, if God in his rich mercy, has given us the eye of faith, the knowledge of himself, and the Spirit of prayer; unquestionably we are his, his people, his children, his chosen; and if we are his beloved people, his dear children, his chosen ones, he will be our helper. Yes, he will help us in every strait, help us out of every danger, help us over every difficulty, help us quite from earth to heaven. He will guide us by his counsel, and afterward receive us to glory. Let us therefore daily, hourly, lift up our hearts to his throne;

and in the prospect of all that is calculated to depress, trouble, or cast us down, cry out, "*Lord, be thou my helper;*" and expecting him to help us in answer to our prayer, let us work while it is called to-day—fight while a foe is in the field —take up our cross manfully—and looking for glory, honour, and immortal life, hasten along the trying path, until we sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God.

Help and salvation, Lord, I crave,
For both I greatly need:
None else these blessings can bestow—
From thee they must proceed.

Help me to cleave to Christ alone—
Where else can sinners fly?
Save me from all self-righteousness,
And every idol nigh.

Help, in adversity, to bow
My neck to bear the yoke:
Save me from wrath and discontent,
Which would my God provoke.

Help me to conquer all my foes,
Satan, the world, and sin:
Save from temptation's snares without,
And this base heart within.

Help me to wait the time decreed,
And then meet death with joy:
Save me from all the ills of life,
The dread of death destroy.

SILVER AND GOLD.

While we are in the habit of looking at all spiritual blessings as in the hands of Christ, and entirely at his disposal; to be received from him, and used by us to his glory. It appears to me that we are not sufficiently impressed with the fact, that temporal things are equally so. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." He claims all the living creatures as his, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. The world is mind and the fulness thereof." And, our beloved Redeemer, taught his disciples to look upon their heavenly Father, as claiming, caring for, and feeding them. "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet *your heavenly Father feedeth them.*" So also the precious metals are his, and are claimed by him. Hence to encourage the Jews, under their comparative poverty, when building the second temple, he said, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Every shilling, every sovereign is the Lord's. He may lend to us, but he still claims the whole as his own. We are at best but stewards, entrusted with a little of his property, for a little time, and for a specific purpose. Let us meditate on this

subject for a short time, the Holy Spirit may condescend to make it a blessing to us. It is a Scriptural, and consequently a holy subject, therefore it may be profitable.

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." It must be the Lord's, for he created it by his power, he concealed it in his earth, he has discovered it just when and as he pleased, he disposes of it to whom he will, he still claims it, makes use of it, and it is either made a blessing or a curse to its present possessor. "The Lord maketh rich." The rich man's heart is in his hands, his life lies at his mercy, and he is held accountable for the use he makes of the wealth entrusted to him. Here the Lord raiseth up the poor from the dust, and puts him in possession of wealth; there he strips the wealthy of what pampered his lusts and fed his pride, and sends him to the cottage of the poor. No man has an absolute right to any of the property he possesses, at best he has but a life interest in it, and not always that. What then have the rich to be proud of? What cause have the wealthy to boast? The more silver and gold we possess, the greater our responsibility. It is a means of usefulness, but it may become a cause of condemnation. Well then may the Prophet say, "Let not the rich man glory in his riches." Let not the poor man envy the rich. Let not the Lord's people look too much to the wealthy, when they want silver and gold to carry on the Lord's cause. Let us all devoutly hear

the Lord say, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts."

Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then, let us look to him for what we need, either for ourselves or his cause. We must use the means that are put in our power, but we should always look above the means to the Lord himself. If I want any thing, whom should I ask for it but the owner? as the Lord therefore claims the silver and gold as his, I will look to him first, ask of him first, and entreat him to dispose the minds of his stewards to do his will in this particular. I fear we all look too much to man, to circumstances, and to second causes. Let us endeavour to correct this mistake, and in future let us first ask of God, and then apply to man. Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us expect to be held accountable for the use we make of it. We are not at liberty lavishly to spend it on dress, furniture, or pleasure; on ourselves, our children, or our relations, while God's cause and God's poor are in want. Many a Lazarus still desires to be fed with the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table. Many a rich man will give pounds for a picture, who will not give a few pence to the Lord's poor. Many will squander hundreds upon gilding, adorning, and enlarging their own dwellings; who say they have nothing to spare to build, enlarge, or beautify God's sanctuary. Many spend more upon themselves in one day, than they do upon the cause of God in a whole year. Can such realize

their responsibility? Do they look upon themselves as stewards? Do they believe that they must give an account of themselves to God? Do they consider their silver and gold as the Lord's? Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us honour God with it. He commands us to do so. He assures us that it is the way to thrive. Hear his own faithful word, "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." He that honours God with his property, will enjoy it if he does not increase it. He that hoards when God's cause needs, will lose; while he that gives, will secure what he has and increase it. As it is written, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us be willing to part with it when God call for it. Does he send a poor Christian to you to ask for assistance? See God's hand in sending him, and obey God's word is relieving him. Does he send some minister of Christ, or the collector of some one of our great societies to you? Give as if you were giving the Lord's money, and not your own. Give cheerfully. Give up to your means. Give with prayer that God's blessing may accompany what you give. Give and feel relieved of a part of your responsibility. If the Lord send a check, be sure you cash it. If he sends one of his children be careful to

treat that child kindly. Coming for money soon puts some people out of temper. But if you are cross, sour, or unlovely in your carriage toward a Christian, ponder well our Lord's own words, "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" Matt. xxv. 40. Jesus takes what is done to his people, as done to himself, whether it be kindness, or unkindness; and he especially observes what treatment his ministers and his poor people receive, and sympathizes with them. May we never forget this; but may it be deeply engraved on our hearts, be constantly before our eyes, and so influence our conduct in everyday life. Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us beware of setting our hearts upon it. Money itself is harmless; yea, it may be a blessing. But *the love of money is the root of all evil:* and yet there are professors who are in love with money. They love to get it, love to talk of it, love to keep it, but they cannot bear to part with it. They seem to love money more than they love Christ, they certainly love money more than they love the poor, the house of prayer, and the missionary cause; for if they did not, with the money they have, the poor in the church would never want, the house of prayer would not be in debt, and the funds of the missionary societies would not be so low. O love of money, what mischief hast thou done! What misery hast thou produced! What dishonour hast thou cast upon the Gospel! What grief hast thou caused God's

ministers! What power hast thou given to Satan! What multitudes hast thou sent through the house of God to hell! What a curse hast thou been to God's church! Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us praise God for it when he gives it. It always comes from his hand, but not always with the love of his heart. If we inordinately desire it, he may do by us as he did by Israel of old, of whom we read, "He gave them their desire, but sent leanness withal into their soul." A full purse does not always bring comfort with it. Better, often, is a little with the fear of the Lord. But if the Lord pleases to give us wealth, let us thank him for every penny. Let us construct a ladder of gold and silver, with which to reach to his throne. Let us bless a giving God, and stand prepared to bless a taking God too. The way to enjoy our wealth, is to feel that we are unworthy of it, to view God as the giver of it, daily and hourly to praise him for it, and to make a good use of every part of it. Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us bow submissively to his wise and holy will if he keeps us short of it. He may see that it would be too powerful a temptation for us. He may see that we should not know how to use it so as to improve it. Unquestionably, if we are Christians, there is mercy in his keeping us short of it. "The Lord maketh poor," and if he has made us poor, let us not repine; but if he has given us food and raiment, let us be there with content. We may fancy how much good

we should do if we had wealth, but it is one thing to have the heart without the means, and another for the means and heart to be possessed together. Better have the will without the wealth, than the wealth without the will. Many have boasted what great things they would do if God would only trust them with the means, he trusted them and they did nothing. Are we better than they? No, in no wise, there must be special grace given with silver and gold, or they will prove a curse and not a blessing. Many in poverty have walked close with God, but in plenty have wandered from him. Depend upon it, that wisdom, mercy, and love have combined to keep you poor; and they have done so just because it is best for you. Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us ask God's blessing upon it, for "the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich." He promised Israel saying, "I will bless thy bread and thy water:" and why not bless thy gold and silver? Whatever has God's blessing attached to it will do us good. A little with God's blessing will go a great way. Many receive money without gratitude, keep it without prayer, and use it without a sense of responsibility. This is decidedly wrong, for it dishonours God, it depraves the mind, and gives Satan an occasion against us. Finally, Is the silver and gold the Lord's? Then let us make a good use of it. Let us use it to circulate God's word. To send out Christ's missionaries. To build sancturies for the Lord's people. To feed the hungry, clothe

the naked, and make the widow's heart to sing for joy. Jesus thought so little of it, that he trusted Judas, the only thief among the Apostles, with it. He kept the bag, there was no sin in that; but he loved that which was put therein, there was sin in that. Let us not hoard, what we should use; or lay up what we ought to lay out. Let us not waste, but frugally employ as Scripture dictates. He that uses what he has well, may expect to be entrusted with more. But if we do not manage a little as we ought, it is not probable that God will give us much. The best men have often been kept short, but it did not make them unhappy, Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none;" but he said it without one sigh of regret, or without one anxious wish. He would use it if God gave it, he would give what he had if God withheld it.

Beloved, let this subject have its proper influence upon our minds. Never perhaps was it more necessary. It will be sure to do us good, if we rightly employ it. Whatever we have is the Lord's. It is lent us for a time. All that is temporal will soon be taken away from us again, for "naked came we out of our mother's womb," and naked shall we soon leave this world. What we use for God's glory, and the good of souls, will be remembered with pleasure, and will be rewarded by the Judge of all; but what we have unduly hoarded and left behind us, will . . . I say not what, but leave the future to decide. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do

good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith." Let us not imitate the wicked and slothful servant, who went and digged in the earth, and "hid his lord's money." Let us receive all as from God, let us hold all as belonging to God, and let us use all for God. Let us live daily in prospect of eternity. Let us commit the keeping of our souls to God in well doing. Let us do what good we can while we live, and thus endeavour to leave the world better than we found it. Yea, let us so live, so act, and so die, as reasonably to expect our Lord and Master to say to us, "WELL DONE, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." May it be even so. Amen.

Lord, shouldst thou weigh my righteousness,
Or mark what I have done amiss,
  How should thy servant stand?
Should others plead their works, yet I
Must hide my face, nor dare to cry
  For mercy at thy hand.

Shine, then, thou all-subduing light
The powers of darkness put to flight,
  Nor from me ever part:
From earth to heaven be thou my Guide,
And oh, above each gift beside,
  Give me an upright heart.

HE HAD NO HEART IN RELIGION

THE conduct of many persons, who are regular hearers of the Gospel, is quite inexplicable. Why do they attend the means of grace? What do they expect from their attendance? They hear prayers, but they never join in them. They listen to sermons, but they are not much affected by them. If the minister warns, they are not alarmed. If he invite to Jesus, they will not come. If he hold up the glorious promise of eternal life, they will not believe. If he admonish them to flee from the wrath to come, they will not attend to it. They are like the pew door, moving backward and forward; they make no progress, and feel very little more concern. They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, they refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Christ is become of no effect unto them. They seem to be hardened by the very sound of mercy. We look at them, we pity them, we pray for them, we speak pointedly to them, but it appears to be without effect. Their state reminds me of what I read a short time ago, as follows. A Christian minister relates, "*I was called to visit a death-bed. I recognised a constant hearer and began to talk to him,* 'STOP, SIR,' *said the dying man,* 'GO AND TELL THE CONGREGATION YOU HAVE SEEN ONE

WHO IS GOING TO HELL, BECAUSE HE HAD NO HEART IN RELIGION.'"

Here we have the mystery unravelled, the matter is made plain. "*No heart in religion!*" Yes, that is it. And we have cause to fear that such is the state of thousands who regularly sit under the Gospel. They hear of sin, but they have no heart to repent. They hear of Jesus, but they have no heart to believe in him. They hear of God's most gracious character, but they have no heart to love him. If they unite in the hymn, the heart is not praising God. If they stand up during prayer, they have no heart to pray. If they hear the Lord's people telling of spiritual things, they have no heart to join with them. "*No heart in religion!*" What a state to be in, for there can be no religion without the heart; and there can be no peace on earth, or prospect of heaven, without religion. In producing religion, the Lord changes the heart, and the result is, there is a change in our tastes, desires, pleasures, and pursuits. Before, we were all heart for the world, for sin, for the prince of darkness; now, we become all heart for pardon, holiness, and God. The nature being renewed, there is both an inward and outward change. The man has heart, in prayer, in conversation on spiritual subjects, and in all he undertakes for God. God dwells in his heart, and his heart finds its happiness in God. He is never so much at home, as when God condescends to hold sensible communion with him at the mercy

seat, or, when saints converse with him of their personal experience of divine things.

"*No heart in religion!*" And what is religion without the heart? God asks, "My son, give me thine heart." Jesus testifies, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouths, and with their lips they honour me, but their heart is far from me, *in vain do they worship me.*" All worship is vain without the heart. God cannot approve of it, he will not accept it. Any thing may be excused if the heart is engaged, but nothing is accepted if the heart is not employed. The man is as his heart is. He has therefore no religion if his heart is not in it. He may have the form, but it will avail him nothing. He may have the name, but it only proves him to be deceived or a deceiver. Heartless religion may do for health and ease, but it will not do in sickness or death. Then we shall want something solid, something substantial; something that God's pure eyes will approve of, something that will sustain us in prospect of the awful realities of eternity. Religion in the heart, and the heart in religion, will be necessary then; and no substitute for these can be found.

Friend, are you a hearer of the Gospel? Have you a place in the house of prayer, and a Bible in your own house? Do you fill the one and read the other? If so, let me ask you, *Have you any heart in religion?* If not, let me urge you to think seriously of the matter, let the words of the poor dying man referred to dwell in your

thoughts, "*I am going to hell, because I had no heart in religion.*" What must he have felt when he used these words? What must his minister, and his relations have felt when they heard these words? *Going to hell!* To HELL!! What, to that place where hope expires, where despair seizes upon the heart, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched? To HELL!! That is where God's wrath burns like fire and brimstone, where Satan and his angels torment lost souls, where reflection on mercies slighted, a Saviour rejected, and being satisfied while there was no heart in religion, adds tenfold to the torment of the lost soul for ever. HELL!! GOING TO HELL!!! Why there is no deliverance from hell. No jubilee trumpet is ever heard there. No invitation of mercy is ever given there. There is no redemption from *that* state of slavery, degradation, and torment. Eternity gives emphasis to every word in the dreadful sentence, and point to every instrument of torture. GOING TO HELL, and going there, BECAUSE HE HAD NO HEART IN RELIGION!! How dreadful! Lying on a dying bed, in the land of hope, surrounded by weeping friends and relatives, all anxious to minister to his comfort, with the servant of Christ unfolding the Gospel to him, and yet fully persuaded that he was going to hell, because he had been satisfied with the form of godliness without the power, and a name to live while he was dead. Can you imagine anything more affecting, more alarming, more dread-

ful than this? But put yourself in his place, just suppose that it was your case. For if it was his once, it may be yours before long. "*Mine*," you say. Yes, yours. And something similar to it will be yours, if you can be content to go on without any heart in religion. O ye heartless religionists, God's mercy will not always linger over you, God's justice will not always hold back its sword from blood; soon, very soon it may be said, "The time is come, the time that I should punish you!" Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong, in the day that God shall deal with you? Do not mistake his character. Do not presume on his mercy. Do not fancy that a few sighs, groans, or cries from your death-bed will turn his heart toward you, after you have despised his mercy, and treated his word with contempt for years. Do not conclude that because he has borne with you so long, therefore he *will* bear with you for ever. Some have thought so, and thousands have acted as though they did. Hear him speak to such in his own word, "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." Is there not something awful in this passage? Especially when we think of its coming from the heart and lips of an infinite God, whose prerogative it is to have mercy and forgive, and whose

name is love. But perhaps you may now say, "I wish I had heart in religion, but I feel so dead, so cold, so indifferent to every thing that is really good; that I fear I can never work my heart up to the state required." You are right, you never *will*, you never *can* work up your heart to such a state; but there is one promise in God's book which just meets your case, you may take that and plead it before God until he fulfil it in your experience, and then your heart will be in the state required without any working of yours; it runs thus,—"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Here the Lord promises the very thing you want, and Jesus says to you, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find." Make up your mind then to this point, "I must have a new heart or perish, no one can give me this but God, he has promised to hear all that call on him, and to be found of all that seek him, I have been reading of one who knew he was going to hell because he had no heart in religion, the Lord helping me, I am determined that shall never be my case, for I will ask, seek, and agonise with God until I receive the blessing." Reader, of all delusions beware especially of this, being satisfied with a religion without a heart, or to go on having no heart in religion.

ZEAL.

Be zealous. REVELATION iii. 19.

COLDNESS or lukewarmness in the ways of God, is peculiarly offensive to our Lord and Saviour; for if any one deserves our whole hearts, if any one ought to have the whole of our energies, it is Jesus. He was zealous for us. Zeal covered him as a garment. His zeal was very early displayed, when he stood up for us in the everlasting covenant; engaging to be a Substitute, Sacrifice, and Shepherd; and from the moment of his engagement his zeal never abated. Zeal for us characterized his whole life, and sustained him in the bitter pangs of his ignominious death. Most zealously did he labour to work out a righteousness which would justify us before his Father, and with equal zeal he presented himself before divine justice to suffer the due desert of our crimes. He died for our offences, and so made an atonement for them; he arose for our justification, and now, the moment we believe in him, we are justified from all things and for ever. He went into heaven full of holy zeal, and there he zealously pleads our cause before his Father, and enables us to say, "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Being thus zealous for us, for our

safety, honour, and true happiness, he wishes to see us zealous for him. Our indifference grieves his loving heart. Our selfishness wounds him in a tender part. He expects us to be devoted to him, consecrated to his service, and glowing with zeal to carry on his cause. Beloved Christian friends, Jesus speaks to you, to me, to each, to all of us, and he says, "*Be zealous.*"

We should be zealous for the truth. It is God's mind. It is the revelation of the Saviour's love. It is the remedy for the sinner's woes. It is the charter of the Church's privileges. It is dear to God's heart. It is watched over with a jealous eye. It should be prized as inestimably valuable. We should zealously defend it, for it is sure to be assailed by erroneous and ungodly men. Not in the spirit of Satan, not with bitterness and wrath; but in the Spirit of Jesus, with firmness and holy love, we ought to "contend earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints." Never let us give up one particle of truth, but endeavour to maintain it whole and entire. The truth, is the mirror in which God is seen; the map, on which our road is marked out; the law, by which our duty is made plain; let us therefore zealously defend it, nor ever tamely surrender any part of it. We should zealously adorn it. Not by the tinsel of human eloquence, or by trappings borrowed from heathen schools, but by a consistent and holy walk. We ought to be living expositions of the truth. In our conduct, the nature and tendency of the Gospel ought to be seen,

By our meekness and gentleness, by our fidelity and prudence, by our self-denial and benevolence, by our temperance and brotherly kindness, by our patience and fervent love, we ought to adorn the most holy truth of God. God calls for it. Men expect it. The Gospel is calculated to produce it. We should be zealous to spread it. It is too good to be kept to ourselves. It was never intended to be confined to the Church. The world is the field in which this seed is to be sown. The whole race of man is to be made acquainted with this divine revelation. Every creature, without one solitary exception, is to be told of this good news. Every one who knows it, ought to publish it. The whole Church, should be zealous to spread it over the face of the whole earth. Every believer should be anxious to communicate it to all he possibly can. It is the word of life, let us hold it fast. It is the light of the world, let us place it on the candlestick. It is the balm of life, let us send it wherever pain is felt, or sorrows are experienced. If we are not zealous to defend the truth, can we know its value? If we are not zealous to adorn the truth, can we understand its design? If we are not zealous to spread the truth, can we sympathize with human misery, or desire to spread God's glory.

We should be zealous for the Lord's people. They are precious in his sight. They are his jewels, his peculiar treasure. He loves them more than all the productions of his power. His

heart has been set upon them from eternity. Chosen for his own glory, purchased by the precious blood of his only begotten Son, sanctified and made the temples of his Holy Spirit, he cares for them with the tenderest care. He wishes us to view them as he does. To love them as he does. To care for them as he does. To act toward them, as we should act toward him. If therefore we are cold, distant, and haughty in our bearing toward them it grieves him. If we do not feel interested in their welfare, concerned for their comfort, and desirous of promoting their holiness; he is, he must be, displeased with us. We should be zealous to encourage them. They need it. They have enough to discourage them. Satan, sin, and the world, unite to distress, beguile, or discourage them. They need our tenderest sympathy, our brotherly affection, our kind attentions; and viewing them as the children of God, as the members of the mystical body of Jesus, as the pupils of the Holy Spirit, we should be zealous to encourage them in their way to the kingdom. We should zealously assist them. Many of them are poor. Many of them are ignorant. Many of them are afflicted. In these circumstances we ought not to require frequent applications, urgent entreaties, or touching appeals; but our zeal should prompt us to search them out, to minister to their necessities, to instruct their minds, and to endeavour to comfort them under their sufferings and sorrows. What is done to a believer, Jesus takes as done

to himself. As we fancy therefore that if he were on earth, we should zealously search him out, minister to his want, and if possible increase his comforts, so ought we to do to his poor people. They are placed near us for this purpose. They are thus circumstanced to test the reality and the power of our love. We should zealously endeavour to cement them together. They are in reality one body, one flock, one family. Satan has divided them, and he endeavours by all means to keep them in a state of division. Love is the cement of the Church. Not the love of opinions, but the love of persons, of all persons who love Jesus. We must allow liberty of thought, opinion, and action; but we should love ardently while we do so. Here is one who thinks differently to me in the matter of Church government, he differs with me in his opinion of certain points of doctrine, he acts differently to me in some matters of discipline; but he is a Christian. He believes in Christ, he walks in fellowship with God, his life and conversation are holy; then I must love him, and I ought zealously to endeavour to cement and unite together all such in the bonds of holy brotherhood. Let us be zealously attached to the persons of the Lord's people, notwithstanding their differences; viewing them in Christ, loving them for the sake of Christ, and endeavouring to bring them closer and closer to each other. Happy is he who unites differing Christians together; but we cannot say as much of him who separates, alienates, and divides them.

We should be zealous for the Lord's cause. He has a cause upon the earth. It is the cause of holiness and truth. It is distinct from the world, but is intended to be a blessing to the world. It is called his Church. The Church in which he dwells, by which he works, through which he communicates his blessings. It is founded on Christ, taught by the Holy Spirit, ruled only by his word, and intended to carry out his deep and divine purposes. Every Christian is really identified with it, and should never look upon himself as isolated from it. The cause of God is our cause, and our cause ought to be the cause of God. We should be zealous therefore to increase it. To bring sinners under the sound of the Gospel, under the influence of the truth. To lead souls to Jesus, and then into the Church of God. Never should we be satisfied until the largest promises of his word are fulfilled, until the most glowing predictions are made good. Not one of the Lord's family, male or female, should be happy, but as employed, and employed to the full extent of their ability, in endeavouring to increase the empire of the Messiah. We should be zealous to support it. By our presence, by our prayers, by our influence, and by our property. Silver and gold are given us as God's stewards, and we are to use them in God's cause. He often gives them, and then seems to leave us to ourselves, "*I will just see what you will do with them.*" And what do many do? Look at their mansions at their costly furniture

at the dress of their children, at their amusements, at their ..... But I forbear, only just look on the other hand at what they give to support the ministry, to assist missions, to circulate the Bible, to distribute tracts, to relieve the poor, to supply the wants of the sick, &c. &c. Can we say of some people as Paul did of others, "None of us liveth to himself?" If these are stewards, are they faithful? If ministers are their servants for Christ's sake, are they good masters? If the poor believers are their brethren, are they at all like their elder Brother in their conduct toward them? If there is no hope for sinners but through the Gospel, are they very anxious that souls should be saved? The cause of God requires all our sympathy, influence, and untiring support, but does it have it? Shall it in future have it? We should zealously identify ourselves with it. To be one with Christ, how glorious! To be one with the cause of Christ, is only a little less glorious! The one is the glory of the sun, the other is the glory of the moon. God has indentified his cause with himself, and he has identified his people with his cause. They are to sustain it, to increase it, to perfect it. But this requires zeal. It will not be done without zeal. It deserves our warmest zeal, our utmost endeavours. Cause of Jesus! may I be identified with thee, may I zealously support thee, may I be instrumental in increasing thee! To this may every believer add, Amen and Amen.

Brethren, let us be zealous, for Satan is. He never tires, he never rests. Most zealously does he contrive his plans, lay his snares, and watch his victims. He goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Let us be zealous, for sinners are. See the money they spend, the labour they give, the means they employ in the cause of sin and Satan. Their conduct ought to put us to shame. Let us be zealous, for erroneous men are. How active, how diligent, how persevering they appear in propogating error. They employ the tongue, the pen, the press, and the purse, in the most lavish and unsparing manner. Let their conduct be our model, their success our stimulus, and their zeal our reproof. Let us be zealous, for Jesus says, "*I would thou wert either cold or hot.*" The zealous Christian is sure of God's blessing, the approbation of his own conscience, the opposition of Satan, the reflections of every lukewarm professor, and the commendation of all right hearted persons. If therefore the truth is valuable, if the saints are the excellent of the earth, if the cause of God is worthy of our regard, if Satan, if sinners, if erroneous men are zealous, let us be zealous too. Let us warm our hearts at the fire of God's love, let us quicken our motives by a visit to the cross, let us sharpen our weapons by the fellowship of the Spirit, let us seek the grace, the courage, the strength necessary at the mercy seat, and then let us zealously fall to work. Let the work of God be our delight, the welfare of our fellow-men our aim,

and the glory of the Lord our highest object Let us live in earnest. Let us live to purpose. By the shortness of time, by the solemnities of death, by the realities of eternity, by the danger of sinners, by the vigilence of Satan, by the state of the Church, by the character of the present times, by the command of God, by the example of primitive believers, and by the counsel of the Lord Jesus let us stir up our hearts, and stir up one another to "*be zealous.*" "It is good," said Paul, "to be zealously affected always in a good thing." If ever it was good, it is good now. If ever it was called for, it is called for now. If ever it was an honour to be zealous for God, it is an honour to be so now. Brethren, the time is short, and "it is high time to awake out of sleep." By the spread of Popery, by the power of Puseyism, by the activity of infidelity, by the state of our towns, by the condition of our villages, by the wants of the Church, by the woes of the world, by the authority of God, by the blood of the cross, by the promise of the Spirit, by the prospect of success, by the rest of the grave, by the glories of heaven, by the rewards of activity, and by the condemnation of the lukewarm and the slothful, allow me to beseech you, to "*be zealous.*" Be zealous *to-day*, to-morrow you may die. Be zealous in time, and in eternity you will rejoice that you have been so.

NOTHING TOO HARD FOR GOD.

There is nothing too hard for thee. JER. xxxii. 17.

JEREMIAH had to predict the long captivity of Israel and Judah, then he was directed to make a purchase in the land that was to be laid desolate, and having done what the Lord commanded him, deeply affected, he retired to pour out his heart before the throne of his grace. Prayer fits us for our most arduous duties, and is a sweet relief when duty has been performed. We never prize the throne of grace, as we do when our hearts are overcharged with grief and sorrow, and no one but our heavenly Father can give us relief. How deep the devotion, how solemn the reverence manifested by this prophet. "Oh! Lord God, behold; thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." God's glorious works reveal his nature, and while they excite our admiration, they should strengthen our faith, and draw out our souls in prayer. Meditations on his greatness should lead us to appeal to his goodness. When we see what he can do, we should inquire what he has promised to do, and then go and plead with him to do for us according to his word. There is nothing too hard for him. The appeal is to his understanding and his strength.

There is nothing too difficult for God to discover. His eyes are in every place: beholding the evil and the good. Nothing can elude his notice, or escape his eye. All things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do. He discovers the true state of every heart, though the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Every heart lies bare and exposed before him. He fathoms its depths. He turns over its intricate folds. He analyzes its dismal contents. He is fully acquainted with every principle that influences it, with every thought that arises within it, with every word and work that proceeds from it. No one can hide his heart in secret from the Lord. He discovers the winding course of the life. How few pursue a straitforward course. How apt we are to start aside like a broken bow. In looking back we can see what strange turns, what mysterious windings there has been in our paths. We scareely saw them, or were not much affected by what we saw at the time, although the most painful or pleasant events of our life depended on them. But the Lord saw the whole, and while he disapproved of our wandering disposition, he often came forward to prevent our ruin, and to overrule the most untoward events for our welfare. He discovers the true cause of our low estate. We cannot fully or certainly. Sometimes we are ready to ascribe it to divine sovereignty, and sometimes to human responsibility, and sometimes partly to the one and

partly to the other. That the blessed Spirit is grieved with us there can be no doubt, but the exact cause of it we do not perceive. But it is fully known to the Lord; we may therefore go to him in childlike simplicitly, tell him how we feel, appeal to his knowledge of the cause, ask him to discover it, and graciously to deliver us from it. He discovers the occasion of our doubts and fears. There is nothing in God's character, or in Christ's most precious Gospel, to lead us to doubt or fear, but just the reverse, and yet doubts and fears harass and torment us. Why is it? Perhaps the Lord only fully knows. There may be something physical that has to do with it. There may be something infernal. Nature and Satan may unite to lead us thus to dishonour God. Distrust is the root of them. Distrust of God's gracious word, or of his faithfulness to make it good. This is our easily besetting sin. This is the cause of more than half our troubles. O for confidence in God! His eye is upon the course pursued by every member of his Church. His eye tracts us into our domestic circle and our closets; his eye follows us into our business, our society, and our pleasures. He notices our preferences, and our neglects; our resistance to sin, or yielding to temptations. He approves or disapproves of every motive, word, or action, that passes before his omniscient eye. He discovers the work and the design of Satan. He keeps his eye upon his people's grand foe. However quietly the serpent may move,

however deceitfully he may lay his snares, the Lord is privy to the whole. Here lies our safety. The Lord is our keeper, and he that keepeth us neither slumbers nor sleeps.

There is nothing too hard for God to effect. "I know that thou canst do every thing." "Is any thing too hard for me, saith the Lord?" "He doeth according to his will among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth." "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Nothing is too hard for him. No change in providence, however it may appear improbable, or impossible to us. He could bring water out of the flinty rock, and quails to satisfy the wants, and gratify the lusts of his people in the desert. He could feed Elijah for twelve months by ravens, and for two years and a half more by a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in the widow's cruse. He could inundate Samaria with plenty in the midst of famine and fearful desolation. If he will it, the fire shall not burn the three Hebrews, nor the lions injure Daniel, nor death hold Lazarus in the tomb. What he has done, he can do; for he is the same; and if necessary for the glory of his name he will do it, for he will not suffer his name to be polluted. Providence is God at work—at work for the accomplishment of his decrees, the fulfilment of his promises, the manifestation of his character, and the present and eternal welfare of his people. He can give whatever we want, do whatever we need, and glorify himself in giving to us, and working for us.

Nothing is too hard for the Lord. No work of grace. He can break the hardest heart. Though it be petrified like the heart of Manasseh, or like the heart of Saul of Tarsus, he can break, soften, and transform it by a word. He can bow the stubbornest will; how determined and imperious it may be, it must yield at his command. Therefore it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." He can enlighten the darkest intellect. Where man has failed to instruct or impress, he has easily and wondrously shone upon the mind. He can warm the coldest professor. Though he seem to have been born in an icehouse, and frozen into an iceberg, he can melt, warm, and cause the bosom to glow with warm, winning, and tender love. He can quicken the most inactive spirit. Where there appeared to be no energy, no power, no zeal for God; he has inspired the individual with extraordinary activity in his cause, and concern for his glory. He can fructify the most unfruitful church, making "the wilderness like Eden, and the desert like the garden of the Lord." He can cultivate the most barren neighbourhood. Where all appeared hopeless, and every effort vain; for of the hardest stones he can raise up children unto Abraham. He can use successfully the feeblest instrument. Rams' horns, shall bring down the walls of Jericho. Trumpets, pitchers, and lamps, shall conquer the mighty host of Midian. The foolishness of preaching shall save them that believe. The

weakest saint, like the jaw bone in the hand of Samson, shall do wonders, slaying heaps upon heaps. Every instrument is just what God makes it. Every agent accomplishes the thing whereunto God sends it.

See then, to whom we must look. Not to creatures, not to circumstances, not to ourselves; but to the Lord for whom nothing is too hard. We cannot, he can. Creatures cannot, but he can with ease. See then, from what we must draw encouragement, who have to do with one whose wisdom is infinite, and whose power is omnipotent. He can do exceeding and abundantly above all that we ask or think. If God therefore bid us do any thing, let us set about it in his strength, depending on his word, and if tempted to despond or relax our efforts, let us view him as associated with us, and turning to him say, "There is nothing too hard for thee." See then, to what we must appeal. To the almighty power of God. To his ability to discover and to do whatever he will. We are not left to our own resources, or sent on a warfare at our own charges; but the Lord our God goeth with us as a mighty and terrible One, and therefore though in consequence of our ignorance, weakness, and fear, we are liable to fail, yet through his presence, power, and Spirit, we can do all things. See then, of what you must beware, of limiting the Lord. This was Israel's sin, and for this they had to smart, as we read, "How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness and grieve him in the desert! Yea,

they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy. When God heard this he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel; so that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; and delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand." When Moses yielded to fear, and was guilty of something of the kind, the Lord was vexed with him, and said, "Is the Lord's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not." It is at once offensive to God and injurious to us, to limit the power of God on the one hand, or the mercy of God on the other. He will act worthy of himself. He will display the infinite perfections of his nature, in his dealings with the children of men, but more especially with his own people. See then, on what we should fix our faith. On the power of God as pledged to us in his precious promises. If he can do what we want, we have then only to ask, Has he promised to do it? or do any of his promises warrant us to expect that he will do it? If so, we may then go and ask him to do it, and plead with him until he give us what we ask, or something better in its stead. See then, with what we should feed our hope. We hope for great things from God, but not for greater things than he is both able and willing to give. But at times our hope gets feeble: we look at circumstances,

at creatures, at our own vileness, or unworthiness, then up springs questions, fears, doubts, and gloom. Now we must turn away from self entirely, and fix the eye steadily on what God is, as a covenant God and Father in Jesus; upon what God has promised in his word; and especially upon the great fact, that God can greatly glorify himself, by doing great things, for such great sinners as we are. This will strengthen our faith, envigorate our hope, and give us confidence and courage before God's throne. We cannot ask God to do greater things than he hath already done, or than he has promised to do in his blessed word. His loving heart is larger than our most extensive wishes. His promises go beyond our expectations. His power to discover what we want, and to do what he discovers to be necessary, ought to fill us with joy and peace. We have to do with a God who is at peace with us, whose love is fixed upon us, who rejoices in opportunities to do us good, and who has all power over all worlds. Let us then commit ourselves and all our affairs to him. Let us carry all our complaints to his footstool. Let us seek his interference whenever it is necessary. Let us expect him to fulfil his word in our daily experience. Let us put ourselves into his hands that he may glorify himself in us and by us. And, in all times of trouble, in all times of temptation, in all times of conflict; when burdened with cares, when tormented by Satan, when persecuted by the world, when neglected by friends, when smarting under

convictions of sin, when labouring under discouragement, when looking forward with apprehension to a dying hour or a judgment day, let us remember for our comfort, that like Jeremiah we may approach our Father's throne and say, "There is nothing too hard for thee:" therefore thou canst sustain me, thou canst deliver me, thou canst make me a conqueror, and more than a conqueror over every foe, over every fear, and over every inbred lust. Let us place God's power, against our weakness; God's knowledge, against our ignorance; God's mercy, against our misery; God's fulness, against our emptiness; and so live by faith, walk by faith, fight the good fight of faith, and go on expecting "the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls." To God all powerful, to God only wise, be glory and honour, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

Jesus, my Saviour and my Lord,
'T is good to trust thy name;
Thy power, thy faithfulness, and love,
Will ever be the same.

Weak as I am, yet through thy grace
I all things can perform;
And, smiling, triumph in thy name
Amid the raging storm.

THE SPIRIT OF LOVE

2 Timothy i. 7

The fall has stripped human nature of all that is really excellent, so that whatever is good in man comes from God. It is his free gift. Man has nothing good. Man can produce nothing good. He is become altogether filthy. He is totally and entirely depraved. The Law may require, but he heeds not. The Gospel may invite, but he regards not. Judgments and mercies are alike powerless, because he is dead in trespasses and sins. The Holy Spirit alone can change the heart, and he does so, not by baptism, but by the direct putting forth of his power within us. The operation is secret, but a visible change in the course and conduct, makes it known. He imparts a power that will work, a life that will appear, a light that will shine, a nature that will show itself. He brings us to the Law which convinces and condemns us, he leads us to the Gospel which acquits and comforts ns. He reveals Christ to us, forms Christ in us, and sets Christ before us; and then we live upon Christ, live for Christ, and strive to live like Christ. He sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, and then we love God and his adorable Son, we love the people of God, and have only benevolent feelings toward the whole human race. Love is the un-

questionable proof and evidence of real religion, and this love is from the Holy Spirit, who is "*the Spirit of love.*"

He is THE LOVING SPIRIT. He loves all the Lord's people. His love runs in the same channel as the love of the Father and the Son, it has the same objects, and aims at the same end. The love of the Spirit is *free*. He loves us without any thing in us to induce him to do so, just because he will love us. His eye saw no good thing in us, and yet his heart glowed with infinite love to us. He loved us and determined to make us holy, not because he foresaw that we should be holy. All the difference that there is between us and others, or between what we are now and what we were once, is to be traced up to the love of the Spirit. His free and sovereign love. The love of the Spirit is *fixed*. It has its specific objects, and those objects are the Lord's people, all who are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the precious blood of the Son. The love of the Godhead is one, and the love of each of the Divine Persons is fixed upon the same objects, and aims at the same ends. As there is unity of nature, there must also be unity in the exercise of the Divine perfections, and unity in the purposes, plans, and operations of the Divine mind. The love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the love of one infinitely pure, perfect, and divine nature; but it is the love of three distinct persons in that nature. As the nature is one, and the persons are united, the love of each person

must be the same in reference to its objects, energy, and end. The Father loved and chose us to everlasting life, the Son loved and died to redeem us from death, and the Holy Spirit loved and quickened us from a death in sin to a life of righteousness. The love of the Spirit is *faithful*. It never changes. It never can change. "He is in one mind and who can turn him?" Whom he loveth he loveth unto the end. There is not one in hell to-day, that was ever the object of his sovereign love; nor will there be one missing among the glorified at last, whom he loved with his everlasting love. His love was free to fix upon its objects; but being fixed, it is settled for ever. He engaged in covenant to save, he gave his word of promise that he would save; and his covenant will he not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his mouth. "It is impossible for God to lie." As the Son faithfully fulfilled his engagement to lay down his life for his sheep, so, the holy and everblessed Spirit, will faithfully fulfil his engagement to quicken, sanctify, and guide to glory, the whole Church. The love of the Spirit is *fervent*. It is glowing love. There is an omnipotent power, a divine intensity in it. It is love that never cools, that never can cool. Love stronger than death, than any thing out of God. Loving Spirit, shine upon my poor dark soul, strengthen my poor feeble powers, that I may take in clear, correct, and honourable views of thy divine, infinite, and eternal love!

He is THE LOVE-PRODUCING SPIRIT. All spiri-

tual love is from the Holy Spirit. It is a supernatural production. He reveals God to us in the person of his Son, exhibits him before us in his lovely attributes, perfections, and characters, causes his love to flow into our hearts, and thus produces love to him in return. "We love him, because he first loved us." And we never love him, until we realize that he has loved us. The love that rises from our hearts to him, is the effect of the love that flows from his heart to us. He reveals Jesus to us in his glorious person, finished work, and tender sympathy; shows us how he has loved us, and whispers, "He loves you now;" this enflames our hearts with love to him. We see him living for us, dying for us, interceeding for us, coming in glory to receive us to himself, and we cannot but love him. He reveals to us the true excellency, dignity, and privileges of the saints; sets them before us as the excellent of the earth, as the objects of the Father's love, the purchase of the Son's blood, and the appointed heirs of heaven; and we feel love rising up in our hearts to them: we love them for Christ's sake, and for what we perceive to be excellent and lovely in them. Thus we come to "know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." He shows us the miserable, dangerous, and pitiable state of sinners; reminds us that they are our brethren by nature, and that we were once involved in the same misery, and exposed to the same condemnation; and pity, compassion, and

love arises in our hearts toward them, and we long to do them good, endeavour to bring them to the Gospel, or send the Gospel to them, that they may taste, see, and enjoy the privileges that we do ourselves. Thus what is presented to the sanctified and enlightened understanding, affects the heart; the affections become influenced and changed, we who were once "hateful and hating one another," are filled with love to all, and are concerned to do them good. By humbling views of ourselves, by realizing views of the cross of Christ, of the throne of glory, and of the horrors of hell as our desert and the sinner's doom; love is excited, strengthened, and drawn forth; and we love God supremely, his people with a love of complacency, and sinners with a love of pity and compassion.

See then, how true Christians are known. Not by correct views of doctrine, not by mere moral behaviour, not by the observance of certain religious rites, but by love. Have what we may, without love we are nothing. Lack what we may, with this holy principle ruling and reigning in our hearts and lives, we "are manifestly declared to be the epistles of Christ." See what the Church, what we all need, the Spirit of love: the love-producing Spirit. We have gifts, we have wealth, we have learning, we have members, but we want love. Pure, spiritual, holy love; such as the early Christians possessed, which caused their heathen persecutors to exclaim, "See how these Christians love one an-

other." There is a mighty power in love. A convincing, a silencing, a winning power in love. Love conquers when nothing else will. It is mighty to conquer others, but is unconquerable itself. See what it is that we should daily pray for, "*The Spirit of love:*" that the Holy Comforter would come down and fill every Christian's heart, regulate every professor's life, and make us all as remarkable for love, as we have been for the want of it. Let but this blessing be granted, and our strifes would cease, our breaches would be healed, and our divisions would come to an end. Then we should be but one body, one flock, one army, one Church. Then each would not only be prepared, but anxious to help another, and if necessary we should be ready to "lay down our lives for the brethren." See, how we may know that we have received the Holy Ghost. If love to God, love to Jesus, love to saints, and love to the souls of sinners, rule in our hearts, *there is* the Holy Spirit. No one but a Divine Agent could produce such a change, and the Divine Agent that doth this is the Holy Spirit. Thus our regeneration is proved, our election is unquestionable, and our doubts and fears would die. We should have no slavish fear of God, for such "perfect love" would "cast out fear." The peace of God would rule in our hearts, the cross would lie easy on our shoulders, the prospect of glory would brighten before our eyes, and solid happiness would be our portion. If therefore we would honour God, if we would obey the

Saviour, if we would silence gainsayers, if we would elevate the Church of God in the world, if we would constrain the world to believe that our religion is divine; let us with one heart, with one voice, as one man, unite to plead with God, that he would pour out his Holy Spirit upon us as "*the Spirit of love.*" Holy and everblessed Spirit, let it please thee to fill the writer's heart, with thine own sweet love; and fill each reader's heart with it, fill the heart of every member of the ONE CHURCH with the same; that so Jesus may be glorified, Satan dethroned, the adversaries of the cross confounded, and paradise be restored to earth.

Lord, that so poor a worm as I
  May to thy praise and glory live,
Now all my nature sanctify,
  And all my thoughts and words receive;
Me for thy service wholly claim,
Claim all I have and all I am.

Take thou my soul and all my powers;
  O take my memory, mind, and will,
Take all my goods, and all my hours,
  Take all I know, and all I feel;
Take all I think, and speak, and do;
O take my heart, but make it new.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF MISS S. B.

Aged 21 Years.

And is it true? is Sarah called away
To take her mansion in the realms of day?
How short her course! how soon her race is run!
Her sorrows ended, and her joys begun!
Impress'd at first by her dear father's death,
In prayer she soon employed her youthful breath;
A widowed mother's sorrows made her feel
A wound. which Jesu's love alone could heal.
Her brother, taken in the bloom of youth,
Fix'd in her mind indelibly this truth—
"Childhood and youth are vain. O seek the Lord!
Call on his name, and search his holy word."
That lovely boy had sought a Saviour's face,
His heart was chang'd by God's renewing grace;
He felt the power of Jesu's tender love,
And left the world, to dwell with Him above.

Our Sarah, too, gave up her heart to God,
And built her hope alone on Jesu's blood;
Renounced the world, was buried with her Lord,
Her aim his glory, and her rule his word.
Fond of the shade, she shunned the public gaze,
Walking with God in all his holy ways;
She lived by faith, and proved her faith by love,
Seeking her varied talents to improve.

But short the time allotted her below,
Stern death appear'd, and aim'd the mortal blow;
She sicken'd, droop'd, and yielded up her charge,
And now in realms of glory walks at large.

But oh! the peace that fill'd her ransom'd breast!
As she was sinking into endless rest!
Her Saviour whisper'd, "I will never leave,
In life I 'll bless thee, and at death receive."
The doubts and fears that had distress'd her heart,
Chas'd by the promise, did at once depart:
The confidence of faith, and joy of hope,
United now, to bear her spirit up.
No clouds, no darkness hover'd o'er her mind;
She saw her Saviour faithful, true, and kind;
She knew that for her sins He groan'd and bled,
And on his bosom laid her weary head.
Satan was once allowed to try his power,
To shake her hope before the dying hour;
But she by faith in Jesus overcame,
And gave the glory to his holy name.
The prospect now divinely clear and bright,
The soul began preparing for its flight;
She felt the Spirit's witness in her breast,
The prelibation of eternal rest.

"The love of Jesus! Oh how sweet!" she said,
"How sweet his love upon a dying bed!
In health I doubted; but I doubt no more;
I 'm sav'd by grace; my Saviour I adore."
"Jesus," she cried, "has been my living theme,
And all my soul can want is in his name;
Jesus alone is now my dying hope,
Nor can I sink while I have such a prop."

To one, a fellow teacher, near her bed, [said,
"Love not the world, walk close with God," she
"'T is all important in the days of youth
To seek, to know, to love the Lord in truth.
Unto my fellow teachers from me say,
Work for the Saviour while 't is call'd to-day;

The night is coming, when our work is o'er;
My night is come, now I can work no more.
Tell them a dying teacher's lips entreat,
Be faithful, when your little charge you meet:
Be faithful, for not one of you can know
That you shall meet your charge again below.
I little thought when last I meet with you,
My class to teach, and Jesu's will to do,
That I should meet you here on earth no more,
To teach, to pray, and Jesus to adore.
O may I meet my class at that great day,
And hear my gracious Lord and Saviour say,
'Ye children, blessed of my Father, come,
Now enter heaven as your eternal home.'
I soon shall be with Jesus whom I love,
And serve Him in his glorious realm above;
I am not worthy of that glorious crown,
'T is all of grace, free, sovereign grace alone."

When death had thrown its last, its fatal dart,
Her nature struggled (friends are loath to part);
The soul was loath to quit its house of clay,
Though call'd to regions of unclouded day.
She turn'd to those around her dying bed,
Anxious to know her state, to them she said,
"And is this dying? tell me, is it death?
Say, is it thus we yield our mortal breath?"
"It is," a friend replied. "But are you sure,
And have you seen a soul depart before?"
"I have," 't was said, "and thus the spirit flies,
To meet its Lord and Saviour in the skies."

"O then, come quickly, Jesus, Saviour, come!
Receive my spirit to her heavenly home:
Sweet Jesus! fetch me to the realms of day:
Why doth thy chariot wheels so long delay?"

The dying struggle ceas'd, the soul had fled,
And left the body lifeless, cold, and dead.
But who can tell the joy that now is known
By that immortal soul before the throne?
Clad in the robes of victory and peace,
It shouts, "All glory to redeeming grace."
At her Redeemer's feet she casts her crown,
Who lov'd, and sav'd, and claim'd her for his own;
She rings her harp in honour of his blood,
Through which alone she 's justified with God.

Farewell, dear sister, joy and peace are thine,
Pleasures immortal, glorious, and divine;
'T is but a little while and we shall meet,
And cast our crowns with you at Jesu's feet.

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